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MORAL JUSTICE

OF

UNIVERSALISM.

TO WHICH IS

PREFIXED A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

Read me with care; then with candor, forsooth,
Judge for yourself, and adhere to the truth.

BY LEWIS C. TODD.

ERIE.
JOSEPH M. STERRETT, PRINTER.

1845.

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Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1845,
By L. C. TODD,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of
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PREFACE.

THE reader should be informed, that this work is not designed mainly to prove universal salvation, or to disprove endless misery; though this question is incidentally discussed in connexion with the subjects of controversy. That work has been done by Ballou, Balfour, Whittemore, Rogers, and others, and little probably can ever be added to their arguments. But several other elementary subjects of great and engrossing interest, intimately connected with the main question, remained, as was conceived, not sufficiently elucidated, and not as generally understood as they should be. I am aware, that on some of these points, I differ from some popular Universalist writers. But I consider it proper to pursue my own judgment; and lay before the public, the result of my own reflections with perfect independence; as *we* acknowledge no infallible guide but reason and scripture. In some things, I may have erred; for "to err is human," but I have endeavored to be right, and trust this work contains no very pernicious errors. Many of my subjects deserved a more extended argument, but as I did not wish to risk a large and expensive Book, it seemed necessary to give the main arguments briefly, and omit much which might have added to the strength of the positions. I have originated generally what I have writ-

ten, though probably others may have advanced many of the same ideas. Since the whole was written, I have heard of Professor Bush's work on the resurrection, but have not yet seen it; and from accounts, I think it probable we should agree on that subject. I have before published some portions of this work through the periodical press. I have not designed this to be so much a Biblical, as a philosophical and metaphysical view of the subjects. Yet sufficient reference is made to the sacred writings to evince the harmony of my positions with divine revelation. The reader, if very sensitive, may find some strong language and sarcastic expressions; but he is assured, that these were designed to expose error, and not to injure those who honestly differ with me in opinion. None can be justly blamed for their honest opinions, however erroneous they may be. Persons of large *combativeness*, like the author, are most irresistibly inclined to use strong and pugnacious expressions, in controverting great error; but when at the same time, like him, their *destructiveness* is small, they feel no malignity toward their opponents. The little work is now presented to the reader with the hope, that it may contribute something toward the onward progress of liberal Christianity.

THE AUTHOR.

Erie, Sept. 18, 1845.

A SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

THE writer is aware that writing of one's self is delicate business; and very liable to be attributed to vanity, and charged with partiality. I am free to confess, that I have never done any thing sufficiently wonderful or extraordinary, to justify an Autobiography, excepting upon one ground. That is, incidents in my public course, have been very much subjected to misapprehension and misrepresentation. And as I here present a little work to the reader, he may reasonably be supposed to desire some information upon such matters. Besides, I am admonished by a knowledge of my organic condition, that I have but little time probably left for the correction of errors. Uninteresting details, will be omitted, therefore; and this concern will be reduced to a very limited sketch.

I was born in North Haven, Conn., Feb. 17th, 1794. When an infant was removed to Fairfield, Herkimer Co., N. Y. My father was a farmer by occupation, in limited circumstances, and a member of the close communion Baptist Church: of which he finally became an Elder; and preached in Salisbury, (the town adjoining that of his residence,) for about twenty years. He received no salary, and probably such preaching was worth none; but labored on his little farm to support his family. He was uneducated; and his people thought such noise as a man could make without study or reflection, was good preaching enough; especially since it cost them nothing. He possessed some reasoning powers and consid-

erable independence of mind. He had originality of thought enough to often feel perplexed with the inexplicable dogmas of his Church. As my father was poor, I was given away at the age of six years to be done better by. Parents must be very poor not to be able to do as well by their children as strangers. I would exhort all such to work hard before they give up their defenceless children to those who love or profess to love a cruel and malicious God. The people who took me, out of great kindness, and kept me four years, were devoted to Presbyterianism. And they understood the Proverb well, "He that spareth the rod spoileth the child." And they taught me the *Catechism;* and learned me to reverence a Presbyterian priest, as the very essence of all that is holy, and the very acme of all human greatness. At ten years of age, my father, being dissatisfied, took me home, where I was trained to hard work, till I became 21 years of age. In my early life, I was very diffident and dull, but my mind was much inclined to religious feeling and reflection. The terribleness of God—the glories of Heaven—and the flames and agonies of hell, were most constant subjects of my waking or sleeping dreams. At the age of 12, I had learned to read, write, and spell, but very imperfectly. From that time, I could not be spared for school until I was 18 years of age. My father's library consisted of a Bible, Watt's Psalms, a Dictionary, and Almanac. During this period I frequently spent leisure hours in writing composition. These articles were much like other juvenile productions. I only mention this, because I believe boys often have a particular taste or turn of mind which is natural, and which often manifests itself in spite of all disadvantages, which parents should consider in educating and fitting them for the pursuits of life.

When I was about fourteen years of age, our vicinity was visited with what was called "a great revival." I then supposed all the awful stories I had heard of "ghosts and goblins damned" were perfectly true; and believed

the awful judgment was then probably at hand. I took hold in good earnest to get religion so as not to go to hell. I had never heard of any other reason why people should have such an awful thing as religion seemed to be thought to be. I repented—and agonized—and prayed, and felt horrified, and terrified; and when these feelings subsided, I felt better of course, and concluded I was "brought out in religion." Others thought so too, and advised me to unite with the church. But after a little reflection upon my "experience," I began to discover that I was after all, just about the same kind of a boy as before; and had experienced no *supernatural* change! And as I had prayed most earnestly, and tried to get religion and could not get it, I began to conclude myself to have been reprobated from all eternity to damnation. This gave me many gloomy forebodings and terrible apprehensions; but as it could not be helped, I thought I would make the best I could of it. This state of things continued, till the summer of my eighteenth year, when I went to hear the Rev. Paul Dean, a Universalist preacher, who had commenced preaching occasionally in that county. Mr. Dean was then one of the most popular and interesting preachers in the U. States. His eloquence was so far above any thing I had ever heard before, that it appeared to me entirely superhuman. It seemed as if this must be indeed a messenger from heaven, who was sent to bring down its truth and grace to comfort and bless mankind. New and joyful ideas and reflections thronged my mind. I felt entranced, captivated, and enraptured. I was then "born again," because then I experienced a thrill of delight and reverence, that all subsequent events has never totally obliterated. I knew very little of the evidence of his doctrine, but I *felt* perfectly certain that it was true; and that Mr. Dean was inspired from heaven to promulgate it. After this, my father and myself frequently debated the subject, while at work together, as long as I remained at home. I soon discovered, that

my father's views were undergoing a gradual but certain change; which after some five or six years, resulted in an open avowal of Universalism. He was on that account expelled from the Baptist Church—expelled for believing or *guessing* that all men would finally return unto the Lord, just as all the Baptists wished them to do. What a crime! Had he continued to believe that *somebody*, if only *one* of Adam's race would never become good, then all would have been right. He might have prayed for the conversion of all men; but to *believe* his prayers would be answered—Oh, that was most horrible!

On my eighteenth winter, I was permitted, for the first time in six years, to attend a little school in the vicinity, for the term of six weeks. During this six weeks I studied English grammar, which is all the time I ever devoted to that branch. It is true, I improved that time with all my might. My nineteenth winter allowed me eight weeks for school, which was devoted to Arithmetic mainly. And I found myself master of such works on that science, as were used in common schools. On my twentieth winter my father engaged me to teach school in our own neighborhood for four months and a half. My evenings and mornings were all devoted to Arithmetic and Mathematics. I detail these trifling matters, to show our boys, that if they wish to learn, and are willing to work for it, very few can find an excuse in the want of opportunity. Those who have no taste and do not love study, should never be sent to college—it is not their place. Education cannot be given, nor bought, nor sold—it must be acquired.

The next two years after I became twenty-one, I devoted to teaching school and attending the academical institution at Fairfield. During this time, I passed through the Latin and Greek Grammars, Virgil, Cicero, the Greek Testament, Surveying, Euclid, Algebra, and Logic. I liked the study of Mathematics, but loathed that of the dead languages. I came to the conclusion,

which has never changed, that a vast deal of time and labor are sacrificed to the literary whim, of making so much account of the dead languages. They are not of sufficient use to remunerate the labor they cost. The Greek, to be sure, is necessary for biblical criticism; but there are living languages, and deeply important studies enough, that have a direct connexion with practical life, to engage and exercise the mind, without wasting the energies of youth upon the dead and useless lore of past ages. During this time I paid very little attention to theological matters, and was undetermined in relation to my future course. My Preceptor was the Rev. *V. H. Barber* of the Episcopal Church. One evening, he informed me, that they had funds for educating a limited number of young men for the ministry. And that if I felt disposed to take orders with them, they would provide for my collegiate education. A liberal education appeared to me of great value; but my answer was, "I am a Universalist." He answered that he knew it; but that that was a matter of no consequence. That many of their clergymen believed in the final salvation of all men; but did not think it advisable to hold forth the idea generally in the present condition of the world. That they considered it better to preach practical christianity, and not meddle with this controversy. But my mind was that if I ever preached the Gospel, I should be unwilling to suppress a doctrine, which appeared to me to unfold the very elements of christian morals and human happiness.

In the fall of 1817, I took leave of my paternal home, and journeyed to Chautauque Co., in the most western part of the State of New York. My object was to visit a brother and sister residing in that county, whom I had not seen for several years; and to find employment in some school. That was a wrong move—I had no business there. That was then a very new country. Its principal villages were but just located and commenced, and new settlements were just extending into different

parts of the county. Small openings and log houses, separated by extensive forests, then constituted the general scenery of that region. On my arrival, I found the Rev. S. R. Smith itinerating through that region, as a promulgator of Universalism. He was then in full vigor and prime of life; and was justly considered a man of uncommon eloquence and power. He learned my views, and suggested to me the propriety of engaging in the ministry at once. I was then very ignorant of the world, of the Bible, and of the sense given to many parts of it by Universalists. I considered myself very unqualified for preaching, as was the fact. But finally yielded to persuasion and agreed to try. This was a second misstep. I delivered a short extemporaneous discourse in presence of Br. Smith, who encouraged me to *go ahead.* And he immediately left the county on his way to the East. After delivering in all *five* discourses, to very small assemblies in that region of forests, I became fully satisfied that I was not qualified to preach the Gospel; and feeling perplexed and confounded with inexplicable difficulties, I felt compelled to abandon the premature attempt. Call that a third misstep, or let it pass.

Br. Smith has recently published a work on the early progress of Universalism in the State of New York, in which he notices this matter; and attaches an importance to it which it does not deserve. His representation is, that I preached extensively at that time, attracted great attention, and became very popular. And by abandoning the ministry, very much discouraged the friends in that region, and depressed the cause; so that when I afterwards returned to the ministry, I found it impossible to regain the confidence of Universalists; and after a few years fruitless efforts, became discouraged, and consequently renounced Universalism.* So far from all this, I attempted to preach but five times, and this at-

*I have not his work by me, but give the substance from memory.

tracted but very little notice, and never affected my popularity afterwards in the least. Indeed my preaching at that time, excited the attention of Universalists so little, that they had not contributed a single dollar to my support, nor was there any effort to do so. As stated above, Br. Smith had left the country, and has probably been misinformed on the subject. It has been publicly stated, that I became then atheistical; but all this without foundation. I do not recollect that I ever had a doubt of the existence of a God.

Having abandoned the idea of preaching, I was in the woods, without an object, and pretty much indifferent to every thing; and of course in proper condition to take advice. Accordingly, in the spring, (1818,) I contracted for a piece of wild land, took a wife, and went into the woods to clear up a farm. This was pursued till Sept. 1821. In the mean time, I had reflected much upon religion and theology; and had become zealously affected in the cause of Universalism; and re-engaged in its promulgation. I had all the time professed that doctrine; but now felt free, clear, and full of the subject. My congregations were at once full—my acquaintances were rapidly multiplied, and extended into different parts of the country. After preaching some years in that region I was solicited to move to Salisbury, Herkimer Co., where my father used to preach to the Baptists. I did not feel as much at home in Salisbury, (although ample justice was done me,) and after two years services in that region, returned to Chautauque. This was the very place where my premature attempt to preach had deprived me of the confidence of Universalists and ruined the cause, as Br. Smith's book has it. But he not being in that country at the time, must have been grossly misinformed. Here I had a small farm, which I cultivated at my leisure. And usually rode to my appointments, which were at most all distances within fifty miles. And sometimes I journeyed out several hundred miles. I received such compensation for my services

as my friends were disposed to give, which was sometimes liberal, not always, but on the whole, with my work at home, I was satisfied. I had often calls to settle in different societies abroad, but was well satisfied with the popularity and advantages I there enjoyed. I often challenged controversy, through the Press and otherwise; but scarcely ever succeeded in finding an antagonist. Hence I concluded my doctrine was of such clear and indisputable truth, that none dared publicly to contest it.

In the spring of 1831, I sold out my farm and moved to Jamestown, a respectable town on the out-let of Chautauque lake, where I had preached a portion of the time for many years. Here I started a periodical paper called the "Genius of Liberty." This paper was devoted to the propagation of universalism. A large portion of it was written by the Editor, and the doctrine was thought to be vindicated with spirit and ability. An arrangement was made with the managers of a political newspaper for the printing; and in such manner, that they had their pay for the 2d vol. before the work was done. Another mistake! This arrangement proved a very unfortunate one, and a source of much perplexity and trouble. I discovered some habits prevalent among my friends there, which I had not formerly supposed to exist among them; and began to feel much inquietude and anxiety that the doctrine did not exert more reforming energy and moral power. Since that, however, I have been able to account for all those things without impeaching the influence of the doctrine at all. In the mean time, my habits here were more sedentary than usual; and I was engaged more intensely in reading, writing, and reflection on moral and religious subjects than formerly. These things combined, brought on a kind of nervous affection and depression of spirits. I do not think that I was worse dejected than sedentary men often are; but a combination of circumstances rendered the effect more visible and public. My moral sen-

sitiveness became so acute as to fill my imagination with images of crimes and vices that had but little existence. Melancholy and mental suffering magnified the religious stupidity, apathy, and all the faults of Universalists; and spread around me a gloomy world of darkness, wrongs and crimes. About this time, I took hold of the temperance reform; lectured extensively on the subject; and felt deeply engaged in its promotion. I then considered it paramount to all other moral subjects. The Partialists all encouraged and seconded my efforts—so did some Universalists, but many of them were disaffected about it, and treated me very ill. Miserable Universalists indeed—I am satisfied such were loose skeptics in disguise. Universalists are now generally friends to that reform. This opposition tended to increase my disaffection. Treachery, perfidy, violence and crime, filled up my meditations by day—and my dreams were haunted with forms of vice which seemed preparing to break up the foundations of society, and bring upon the world the most appalling wretchedness. I became conversant with some Presbyterians and Methodists, who manifested great affection and kindness. I had begun to suspect the utility and truth of Universalism. I read Prof. Stuart on *aionios* as applied to future punishment, and felt pretty much convinced! Of course was very unhappy, and often wept like a child. In relation to pecuniary matters, I was doing better than at any time before. But I had imbibed a deep impression, that Universalism was untrue and must be renounced. Many then supported Universalism, not as religion, but as an opposition to religion. And many became suspicious and cold, and even abusive. I have never condemned myself for coming out, because with such impressions, I could not have done otherwise, without believing myself guilty of wrong. It was in fact a great sacrifice to conscience. But I have regretted the circumstances which led to such result. A result fatal to my temporal interests, and a source of untold affliction and sorrow.

My public renunciation was made on the 3d of April, 1833: and then I had been publicly engaged in the cause 13 years and 7 months. This does not accord with the statement of Br. Smith, that I struggled a few years to regain my lost popularity, and not succeeding, renounced Universalism. At that time I only intended to abandon Universalism, not to war against it. I believed sin and misery might exist hereafter, and probably might exist forever. Yet I never supposed for a moment, that the sins of this short life deserved endless punishment. This I never believed—and no man of sense can believe it, pretend what they may. I intended to preach certain rewards and punishments, reformation and a good life, exactly as I now do. I intended to urge practical Christianity, without discussing the subjects of endless punishment or universal salvation. I wish to be distinctly understood, that I did not renounce all truth and embrace all the monstrosities of sectarianism. I still believed in no personal devil—no local hell of fire and brimstone—no imputed sin—imputed righteousness—or vicarious atonement. But I did not intend to agitate these matters. So the change of views consisted in this—formerly I believed all men would cease to sin—and then concluded, there was not satisfactory evidence that they would. So my views generally agreed more with Universalists, at the very time of the renunciation, than with any other sect. And my changes of opinion, which have made so much noise in the world, have been very trifling—and no greater than all men experience on some subjects. All religious teachers are trying to change opinions; yet somehow it has happened, that my diversity of opinion on the single question, whether *sin will be endless or not*, has produced much excitement and wonder.

Some have represented that my renunciation was in consequence of pecuniary embarrassments. But the fact is, that by an industrious and frugal course, I was at that time possessed of a competency, and as well off

as I ever have been since. Besides, the very year preceding this affair, I had a pressing invitation to settle in Buffalo on a fair support. I received two letters to that effect, one from Sheldon Smith, Esq., and the other from Br. Benjamin Caryl, still a resident of that city. But this was declined because I was doing well enough, and I did not wish to incur the responsibility of such a location. In truth I considered myself incompetent.—Besides, I had several other respectable calls, about that time. And had every reason to suppose the steady prosecution of my paper would result in the fullest success, which I still believe would have been the case. A little before the final explosion, I had resolved not to collect my subscription arrearages for the paper, (amounting to about $700,) and a young man offered me $300 for them, which was accepted. He collected in a short time about $600 on them, and then absconded $100 in debt to me. This was a dead loss to me of about $500. And by the time I became settled here on my farm, I became *minus* about as much more. I was also offered a good compensation for my list of subscribers by eastern Editors, which was refused on the ground, that it was wrong in any way to aid the cause. This was the way I made money by this affair, which thousands believed to be my sole motive of action. This little change of views, which had resulted from mental despondency, produced an excitement from Maine to the Mississippi, through the public Press, which I had not anticipated. Every body seemed to know the reason. Those who had large *acquisitiveness*, knew it was to make money—those who had large *approbativeness*, knew it was to gain popularity. Where *marvelousness* prevailed, it was known to be a genuine conversion to God. But as often happens, when men undertake to judge that which they know nothing about, they all guessed wrong. I was visited by clergymen of different denominations, mostly by Presbyterians and Methodists. There seemed considerable competition between

them. They rivaled each other in their caresses and soothings; and amidst the elements of censure and vituperation which assailed me, the tokens of friendship and sympathy were as soothing balm to the oppressed, broken, and lacerated spirit. They urged the necessity of making a home with some of them. Still I felt not satisfied with any of their theories, and undetermined in relation to future action. About this time, I was visited by a Mr. R——M——, of Warren, Pa., a member of the Presbyterian Church of that place; who said he was authorised to offer me a salary of $500 per annum, to come and preach to them, and that too without requiring me to unite with them or any other denomination. I rejected this, through fear it might be considered my object in the renunciation. At last an Elder B., Presiding Elder of the M. E. Church proposed to give me a circuit on trial. And after becoming acquainted with their people and usages, he doubted not I should be satisfied to go with them. And if not, I should still have my liberty, and not be considered at all committed to them. I finally yielded to this proposal. *Another misstep!* And I did try to be satisfied with Methodism, though I never swallowed the fourth part of it. I saw in it too much fanaticism—too much bigotry—too much of every thing that distinguished the ancient pharisees, and too little of moral principle—too little of justice and mercy—and too little of christian charity. Some methodists are good christians—they are generally made of the lowest, and most ignorant, and most passionate and uncultivated portions of society. And none else are really fit for that purpose. But I think them as good as ought to be expected, considering *what* they are made of, and *how* they are made. All of them are better than their principles; and none of them as good as they would be with better discipline, more correct views, and higher and nobler conceptions.

Partialists have attempted to make capital out of the fact, that I complained of the immorality of Universal-

ists. The moral character of Universalists has generally much improved since that time, which fact argues well for the influence of the doctrine. I have been able to stand the morals of Universalists most of my life, but less than a year with the Partialists was sufficient to satisfy me that their morality generally was worse than that of my old friends, as bad as that might have been. Truth is, Universalism always makes its votaries better than they would be, while Partialism always makes them worse than they would be without it. The experience and observation of my whole life convinces me beyond a doubt, that this is true. *Now for that Book.* Well—I was on the circuit. I believed myself to have been misrepresented, and my motives impeached, on account of my renunciation, by Universalist Editors. This had deepened my prejudices against them and their system. I happened to be in at Mr. Spafford's of Erie, Pa., an old acquaintance; and conversation turned on this subject. He asked me why I did not write on Universalism; and correct the misrepresentations? My answer was, that I feared to risk the expense, lest the sales would never make me good. He proposed, if I would write such a work, he would publish it at his own risk; which was done accordingly, and he lost by it. This has been a subject of misapprehension among friends and foes. Some have assumed to know that I left Universalism on purpose to write such a book! Just as if I could not have written a book without! All seemed to know that I wrote the Book on purpose to make money —some made my clear profits on it to be 1500—some, 3000—and some, even 10,000 dollars. But the above is the true statement of facts. Mr. Spafford is and always has been the sole proprietor, and the only man who has ever had an opportunity to either make or lose by the book.

It seems proper that I now give my present views of its character. It was professedly written in haste—that is some indication, that some of its positions might be

abandoned upon maturer deliberation. It was also written under a deep impression of wrong from the advocates of Universalism. This could not be considered a proper state of mind for candid and impartial investigation of truth. It inveighs much against the morals and piety of professed Universalists. This indicates the presence of a spirit of retaliation. However conscientious and free from this spirit, I might have deemed myself at the time, its existence is easily detected in many places. But making all reasonable allowances for the coloring which such a state of things would impart to the picture; and I still think it was correctly drawn, so far as my own observations extended. *At that time*, the general character of professed Universalists was far below what it is now. Thousands, spoiled in the partialist school, had come into it with no other religious feelings than disgust and abhorrence at the corruptions and abuses of sectarians. It was impossible to bring such materials at once into form and symmetry. The Book itself allowed that many Universalists were pure in morals, amiable in life, and of most devoted piety. And after becoming more acquainted with Partialists, I found that much of their affected goodness, was but sanctimonious hypocrisy; and that the morals of Universalists, then, bad as they were, were really the best. But the moral power and energy of Universalism, at that time, had not been fairly tested. Its preachers had been compelled to devote their attention mainly to the propagation of their doctrine; because they had to encounter everywhere, the most unfair, bitter, and provoking opposition. The whole religious world were combined in arms against them. All sects, jealous and exasperated against each other, would make peace in a moment, and unite in fondest union, to keep down a Universalist teacher who should appear among them. The ears of the multitude were thus closed against them. Of course some of those that would hear, were honorable and virtuous, but many were of the unprincipled and reckless, who had believed

in endless pain, and yet had stood unmoved under all the storms and thunderings of revivalists; and had become so perfectly hell hardened in their loose and wayward courses, that it was much easier to convince their judgments of the falseness of endless misery, than to warm their hearts with a *sense* of divine love; and purify their affections with moral and pious feeling. All know that it is one thing to believe the truth, and another to do what it requires. Many seemed to think it enough to break down the orthodox—and had been too far morally killed by false doctrine, to be induced to go any farther. But are there not thousands of Partialists, *out* of their churches, who believe their doctrines, but make no pretentions to christian morals or piety? And even *in* their churches, are there not thousands who confess that they have no moral principles at all? That they consider the practice of religion odious; and that they only submit to it to keep out of hell? That they consider religion and hell as the two greatest of all evils; and that they only choose the former as the least of the two dreadful alternatives! They seem to think men would be fools to torment themselves with religion, were it not necessary to avoid something a little worse. As such persons are so corrupt at heart, that nothing but fear can restrain them, they think others like themselves: and hence, suppose Universalists have nothing to restrain them. But correct Universalists believe in reasonable penal restraints, and remunerative encouragements. The ministers of endless wrath, with the flames of hell in their hands, may make many solemn, and gloomy; but by such means, they can never make them really love God or their fellow men. They may to be sure restrain them from some crimes, by fear; but this fear can never improve their dispositions. And we can avail ourselves of all the utility of fear, without endless punishment. No one supposes that human laws must threaten endless punishment in order to be efficient. "Penalties must be *certain*, but need not be severe, *(says Dr. Rush,)* to be

effectual." But whatever fear may do to enforce legal obedience, neither the fear of limited nor of endless punishment, can ever enforce *willing* obedience. I lay it down as an eternal truth founded in the laws of mind, and the nature of things, and confirmed by all observation, that the fear of endless torments never induced a single person to *feel* kind, merciful, benignant, or honest; or to *love* one of the christian virtues, or principles. If this be not true, then cruelty may beget mercy, and love hatred, fire may freeze, and frost may burn! and the eternal laws of nature and of God must be thwarted and reversed. The most correct conclusion upon this momentous subject, may be drawn from a broad view of christian history. From the sixth to the seventeenth centuries, the dogma of endless torments was more fully believed than at any other time; and the crimes of pretended christians during that dark and bloody period, are without a parallel in the annals of human infatuation. The horrible picture of an infinite and endless hell, continually unfolding its woful scenes, upon the frenzied and devil haunted imaginations of the multitude, froze up all the warm fountains of kindness and justice in the human heart; withered up all the christian virtues in its dark and awful contamination; and made mankind wretched and miserable far beyond my pen to describe. This doctrine necessarily substitutes useless forms and rites for a good life; and encourages unabated hatred and unmitigated revenge, toward all who reject these rites, however moral or good they may be. And this doctrine is justly charged with the murder of no less than fifty millions of human beings for opinion! This absurd and awful doctrine necessarily carries along with it a nullification of all just rewards and punishments, and the licentious priest begotten schemes of unjust absolution. And on this doctrine, has been reared the gigantic power of the Roman clergy, who forgave sins for money; and blasphemously sold heaven at public auction! And even now while I write, almost every week brings news of some partialist

priest being detected in some dark act of pollution. The names of Taylor, Mack, Avery, Little John, Strail, Marshal, Judd, and hundreds of others, which darken the weekly journals with their names and deeds, should stop all talk about the licentiousness of Universalism. In Italy and Spain, these views prevail most now, and there the people are most corrupt. In most parts of Europe and in the United States, many do not believe it at all; and most that do profess it, have doubts enough of its truth to pretty near spoil it. These are the redeeming causes which prevent its horrible effects from being realized now, in the darkness and smoke and blood of days gone by.

But to return to the narrative. A rumor has become very general that the Methodists hired me to labor for them at a great salary. Whoever knew Methodists to pay much for preaching? Nothing could be farther from the truth. A circuit was assigned me by the Elder, and no amount of compensation was stipulated. But it was expected I should receive whatever voluntary contributions the friends should make, and no more; and it was expected these would be small, as they proved to be.

After attending my appointments about eight months, and writing the Book referred to above, I felt convinced that my stomach was not made for Methodism. Many of their doctrines I never could believe, and many of their usages I always detested. And finding the real morals of such people, when stripped of their outward sanctity, to be worse than those of the people I had left, I determined to retire from public life. Accordingly, I purchased a farm in the town of Nelson, Portage Co., Ohio, and moved on in the summer of 1834, a little over one year from the time I left the Universalists. There I was at last in a breathing spot, disgusted with sectarian arrogance, deceit, intolerance, and fraud; and with the absurdities of the world. Religious subjects seemed impenetrable to me, and mankind a selfish multitude of inconsistent beings, generally ready to cherish and caress

falsehood and designing villany, and trample in the dust all modest worth and unassuming truth. I sought to find upon my farm that retirement from sectarian rancor, for which my spirit sighed. I assumed the occupation and habits of a farmer, and thought my public career forever closed. I neglected reading, and as much as possible all religious reflections. The most contradictory and antagonistical opinions and perplexing doubts often obtruded themselves upon my mind. Whether the Bible writers did or did not intend to teach endless misery, was a question about which I could not feel satisfied. Yet if they did teach it, their authority was not sufficient to convince my judgment, that such an awful and cruel doctrine could be true. It appeared more reasonable to suppose that uninspired men had invented the dogma for mercenary purposes, than that God is so unjust and cruel, as to be the author of it. And forsooth, I often thought, if God *is* so infinitely malicious and so destitute of all moral principle, as to consign the beings of his own creation to the blistering flames of an endless hell; or to create them with a perfect knowledge that such would be their fate; we, the unpittied and cheated creatures of his power, ought to have no confidence in any thing he does reveal. How are we to know in such a case, that he regards his veracity any more than other moral principles? A revelation from a God, which should ascribe to himself the most detestable attributes of a monster, surely could not contain any very clear marks of veracity. And any being, who could burn his children forever, might deceive them. If God is not good and kind and just, we are not bound to believe any thing though he says it. So if the Bible does teach this horrible doctrine, it must be and ought to be a dead book to all intelligent men. With such views, I spent my time, till the winter of 1843, when I incidentally re-engaged in reading the Bible. I concluded to read impartially, and notice closely every passage that appeared to refer to rewards and punishments. I expected probably to find endless

misery, upon any rules of consistent interpretation. Its contents had become much obliterated from my recollection. But as I perused and reflected, many forgotten ideas were revived. It seemed to possess new interest and attraction. I felt more and more interested with the moral tone and spirit of its pages. My attention became fixed, and my affections deeply engaged in the investigation. New light seemed to shine upon many subjects, which had hitherto appeared inexplicable. And after examining with great care the New Testament and prophetic portions of the old, and explaining the bible by its own light, I became satisfied, that the dogma of endless misery, is not in fact a bible doctrine. This removed a great weight from my mind. The bible appeared again in a new and brighter dress; and an impulse began to be felt to promulgate the gospel of the grace of God. But great difficulties presented themselves. The farm required attention. I had so long neglected mental pursuits, that it seemed doubtful whether I *could* preach. My tools had become dull, lost, and out of order. However, unexpected incidents soon brought me into the long neglected field. I commenced my labors in Parkman, April 3d, *ten years to a day* from the date of the renunciation, and after a religious and mental sleep of about nine years. The June following, I took the fellowship of the association at Ravenna. I continued ministering to the friends in Parkman one half of the time; and the other half in the country around. That little society had been so unfortunate as to have had some preachers worse than none; had lost all energy and hope, and for some time had employed no preaching. But its congregations now soon increased, and a new impetus was imparted to the cause. My determination was to try to build up as well as to pull down; all our anticipations have been realized; and in less than two years, we have erected a beautiful church, and established the best society and congregation in the town. Although from having so long neglected mental pursuits

I do not possess the power I once did, still I think my efforts have done more for the *building up* of the cause, for the last three years, than ever before.

In relation to my book against Universalism, it may be stated, that the design is there stated to be, mainly to controvert that kind of Universalism, which confines all the consequences of our actions here to this life. I still think the work efficient in that respect. At that time, I did not believe present sin to deserve endless punishment, and whether sin and misery would always exist or not, I did not feel confident; yet adduced an argument for the affirmative, which upon further reflection, I am satisfied is defective. And the following work is written to show and develope my settled convictions.

This brings my narrative to the present time, (March 1845.) The rest is future. Upon retrospection, it is obvious, I have committed many errors; and would revise a large portion of my life, had I the power. I have performed about as much manual labor as most working men. Taught some 16 or 18 schools; read but little; thought more. Written several works, besides considerable for the periodical press. Preached over two thousand times, and if I live to get this little book before the public, I shall think I have done more good than harm; and suppose I ought to be satisfied. I have always had good friends; and have always been blessed with enemies, on account of being much disposed to tell the truth; and never felt much disposed to purchase friendship. Among the honorable and good, however, I have never found much difficulty.

To conclude, it is thought best, for the gratification of the curious, to subjoin here, the writer's Phrenological dimensions; as given by D. G. Derby, Professor of Practical Phrenology, in 1840, on a scale of from 1 to 6.

Size of Brain, No. 5.

Temperaments.—Sanguine 1, Billious 4, and Nervous 3.

Amativeness, 5. Philoprogenitiveness, 6. Adhesive-

ness, 4. Inhabitiveness, 3. Concentrativeness, 4. Combativeness, 5. Destructiveness, 3. Alimentiveness, 4. Acquisitiveness, 4. Secretiveness, 3. Cautiousness 5. Approbativeness, 5. Self-Esteem, 3. Firmness, 3. Conscientiousness, 5. Hope, 6. Marvellousness, 2½. Veneration, 4. Benevolence, 5½. Constructiveness, 3. Ideality, 5½. Imitation, 4. Mirthfulness, 5. Individuality, 4½. Form, 5. Size, 5. Weight, 5. Color, 3. Order, 4. Calculation, 4½. Locality, 5. Eventuality, 5. Time, 3. Tune, 3. Language, 5. Causality, 5. Comparison, 5½.

MORAL JUSTICE

OF

UNIVERSALISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE MORAL NATURE OF JUSTICE DEFINED AND ILLUSTRATED.

JUSTICE is a moral principle, the true import of which, we must first attempt to settle, before we can make any progress in moral or theological science. Webster says, it is "right, equity, punishment." But you know a lexicographer does not pretend to give a full and perfect elucidation of the subject comprised in a word of such general and extensive use. Revenge, Justice, and Mercy, are three moral principles, which have a sort of relation to each other; and cannot be fully comprehended without considerable reflection and study. Justice may be said to be always right. It is never wrong. Mercy is always right when not inconsistent with Justice; and Revenge is never right but always wrong.

2. We may inquire, what is right? Some would answer, that is right which God requires. If this deffinition be correct, the heathen might prove their sacrifices right, by first assuming that God requires them. Nay—upon this hypothesis, there would be no rule or way to

determine what God requires, and what he does not; because it must first be determined whether God requires a thing, before we could judge at all of its moral qualities. When in fact, the surest means we have for ascertaining whether God has required a thing or not, is, first to determine whether the thing is right in itself. We cannot know what God requires without some rule to determine what is right. A thing is not right because God requires it; that is, his requiring it is not what makes it right; but he requires it because it is right. Right must have a character of its own; and is that moral fitness or propriety which results from the relation and dependence of things. Hence, an action may be right under certain circumstances, which under other circumstances would be wrong. It may be defined to be that which tends to promote the greatest amount of happiness, without infringing upon the rights of any. Can you give a better definition? This seems to be the original eternal principle, on which is founded the distinction between right and wrong. It furnishes a rule that may be safely worked by in all ages, countries, and in all worlds. Whatever tends to more happiness than misery, without infringing upon the individual rights of any, is right, and the contrary is wrong. All questions of right and wrong may be resolved into this principle. The remote as well as immediate relations must be taken into the account of course. Now Justice, (which is always right,) to an individual, is what that individual of *right* ought to have. And such individual, *of right*, ought to have that, which will promote the most happiness, without infringing upon the rights of others. A man has murdered. We will suppose now that he justly ought to die—that his execution would be right. There must be some good reason why justice requires it, else it cannot be so required. Justice or right requires him to have all the happiness he can have without infringing upon the rights of others. Why then does justice require his death? Not to restore the dead man to life—not to make di-

rect amends for the evil done—not because the death of the murderer can cancel or make right the death of the murdered—and not indeed to gratify the outraged and vindictive feelings of the people. Why then is it supposed that he deserves death? Or why does justice, or goodness, or right, require it? The death of the murdered is considered an evil—why then will not the death of the murderer be another evil? The answer must be; because, if we do not kill him, he would be likely to murder others; and if such a crime go unpunished, murders would become so common, that there would be no safety in society. Suppose in a State, eight murders are committed in a year, and eight men are hanged on that account. Here is a sacrifice of sixteen persons by reason of murder. Suppose too, by reason of this law, eight persons that would have committed murder, have been restrained. In this case the number of deaths has been the same, with this essential difference, that half the number had voluntarily forfeited their lives to the public security. And without such penal restraint, the number of innocent victims might be much greater than those of the guilty under the action of the law.† So it is perceived, the penalty rests solely on necessity. That is, that the greatest amount of good requires it, while it infringes upon the rights of none. This principle goes upon the supposition that the criminal has consented, in the civil compact, to be put to death, if he commits murder, as a compensation for the personal security he has enjoyed, and might still have enjoyed under such law. He dies by a rule designed for his own good, and the good of all. This rule will apply to all punishment—to all penalties. Justice requires a punishment because it is right; and it is right, because it will tend to promote the greatest happiness, without infringing upon the

†This argument is founded on the supposition that capital punishment is necessary, which I doubt, but which question I do not propose to argue in this work.

rights of any. Justice often requires that an individual suffer for his acts; but only when he has forfeited his happiness to the greater good to be promoted. Then justice requires misery never for the sake of misery, but for the sake of the greater happiness. For an injured individual to afflict his injurer as much, without reference to the greater good to be promoted thereby, is not just. And it is in direct opposition to the moral tone and spirit of the Gospel. "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you," &c., (Matthew 6, 44.) From our habits of thinking, and feeling, we may have imbibed the idea, that the injurer justly deserves to be injured, barely because he has injured another, without reference to any good to be promoted thereby. We might as well suppose, because a person burns his finger, justice requires him to burn his toe likewise. If one suffers an evil from his neighbor, and then that neighbor is made to suffer an equal evil, without reference to any good result, the evil, instead of being remedied, is doubled, and the last is as unjust as the first. But justice never requires an unnecessary increase of evil. Justice is RIGHT. It is equity. And it is so for the very reason, that its object is the greatest good or happiness.

3. That principle which requires that another evil shall follow barely because one has preceeded it, is not Justice, but Revenge, or retaliation. And this rule illustrates the only proper distinction between Justice and Revenge. Hence the former is always right and the latter is always wrong. But if justice be in reality so much like revenge, that it requires another evil to be suffered, barely because one has been suffered, then the second evil must be just equal to the one for which it is inflicted. If A has injured B, he must be injured just as much and no more. For if he is injured more, the case is reversed, and the injured becomes the injurer in turn. Upon this principle too, God justly ought to injure the sinner, just as much as the sinner has injured him; or if you please, just as much as he has injured some other

being. So it is seen, by the way, that if such be the nature of justice, even such justice would not require endless misery, unless the sinner had inflicted endless misery on some other being. But this principle is not justice, for the very good reason, that no possible good could ever result from its operations. As it only promotes evil without reference to any good, it only increases evil; and therefore, it *is* evil, and is not justice. As it has no good object, it is totally wrong and unjust; and is, therefore, the offspring of pure malice. Although it has often the appearance of justice, it should ever be regarded as its counterfeit, and as nothing better than modified revenge. Man, alas, too often mistakes it for justice itself! He is too often influenced by revengeful feelings, while he thinks he is only pursuing the dictates of justice. Savages have tormented their victims under the influence of this fatal infatuation. Nations have gone to battle under its vindictive impulse. Monarchs have often mistaken it for the honor of Majesty, and the *principle of penal legislation*. And bigots too have lighted their flesh fires, and unfurled the banners of bloody persecution under its guidance. It has none of the properties of moral justice. That principle is pure and bright as the Divinity. In all its bearings—and all its relations—and operations, it comprehends all proximate and remote dependencies; and embraces and promotes the greatest sum of felicity, with the least possible evil. Such is the nature of justice. Such the immutable principle of right. Such the eternal distinction between good and evil. Such the everlasting line that separates between pure and perfect justice, and dark malignant revenge. A correct view of this principle is of the utmost importance to Theology, Ethics, and Law. A mistake here is a fundamental error, of the most pernicious kind; as it perverts the understanding, and darkens the whole range of moral and religious investigation.

4. Justice is never so tender toward one, as to disre-

gard the rights of others; neither is it so severe toward any, as to disregard the good to be derived from severity. Moral justice is, therefore, always exactly right; and moral right is justice. Hence, we should never do more, and never less than justice. We should never ask, and never give any thing but justice. For what is not just, in moral actions, is unjust; and injustice is always wrong. If it be asked whether Mercy, Charity, and Benevolence, are not justifiable? We answer: They are justifiable *only* when they are just. Just Mercy—just Charity—and just Benevolence, are always right, as every thing that is just is right; but the unjust exercise of these principles would be wrong. That is, to be so kind to an individual, as to do to him what would be productive of evil rather than good, if made a rule of action, would be unjust and of course wrong. It follows from these indisputable truths, that if God should ever punish any of his creatures more than justice requires, he would punish them unjustly and do wrong. And on the other hand, if he should ever punish any of them less than justice requires, he would be unjustly merciful, and consequently do wrong. We are compelled, therefore, to conclude, that the divine character is all comprehended in PERFECT JUSTICE. And if he were any way deficient in justice, that deficiency must inevitably, from the very nature of the case, be an imperfection in his character. And he that approaches nearest to this principle in all his actions, approximates nearest to the moral image of Supreme Perfection.

CHAPTER II.

THE RELATION AND UNION OF JUSTICE AND MERCY.

We have already shown that Moral Justice is exactly right in all cases; and have suggested that Mercy, Charity, and Benevolence, were only proper, when they comport with this principle. Or in other words, Justice is the great regulator which must modify them all to make them right. It is desirable to enter closely into this subject; and draw out to view the nature of Mercy, Justice, and Revenge, so clearly, that their relation to each other may be understood, and that the one may not, in any case, be mistaken for the other. Theologians seem never to define them distinctly. They have inculcated a vague and indistinct and confused notion of them. They have confounded justice and revenge, and even talked eloquently about God's *vindictive* justice, in other words, *revengeful* justice. Like a cold heat, or dark light, or a wrong right. They sometimes define Divine and human justice as two very different principles, entirely inconsistent with each other. They have admitted, and most all the world admits, that human justice only inflicts misery to promote good. The magistrate may punish to a just and rational extent; that is, as far as is necessary to secure the good of those concerned, but no further. The ruler, who should wish to punish offenders to the greatest possible extent, regardless of these ends, would be deemed a monster of cruelty. Should a father heat a furnace and bind his refractory child to its mouth, where it might linger out its life in agony protracted to the last extent—and should this father sit by and laugh at its shrieks and screams, and talk of *his vindictive* justice, and

tell us that he was thus becoming "perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect," what should we say? Should we think he was just? that he was like God—or like a *fiend?* Yet all this is great mercy—and even tender compassion, when compared with what is considered *Divine* justice. That principle, which has been blindly attributed to God, for more than a thousand years, is not justice. Oh, no, it is the blackest—the most awful extent of cruelty and revenge. Compared with this, all the nameless cruelties of its offspring the Inquisition —all the protracted sufferings that tyrants have inflicted—all the dreadful barbarities of indian wars, are but drops to the ocean. This *divine* justice is supposed to be something which no man can—which no man ought to imitate. No one could wish to imitate it, unless his heart is frozen to a rock of eternal winter, where polar storms of wrath and malice forever rage, unwarmed by a single vernal breeze or solar ray. In the horrid language of *Watts:*

> "Far in the deep, where darkness dwells,
> The land of horror and despair,
> *Justice* hath built a dismal Hell,
> And laid the stores of vengeance there.
> Eternal plagues and heavy chains,
> Tormenting racks and fiery coals,
> And darts to inflict immortal pains,
> Dyed in the blood of damned souls."

2. Having thus combined into an unseen world of fire, the cruelty and malice of all the fire makers, tyrants, and bigots, from the furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, down to the bloody scenes of Salem, and called it *Divine Justice,* they have thought it a great mercy, that even they themselves are permitted to escape it. And I should suppose myself, if any body ought to have the fire, it should be those who make it. They have thought, that Divine justice stands forth for universal wo—that it claims the unmingled damnation of all—that it would

pour eternal and corroding fire over all creation! How fortunate for them that their God is not strictly just! But however just, they think this would be a hard case. Here Divine mercy is permitted to interfere! This is supposed to be a perplexing case. One of God's good attributes demands universal damnation—and another of his good attributes demands universal salvation.*

*That the reader may see that I correctly represent the contradictory views of our opponents, I will subjoin some statements here from a work against Universalism, by Rev. J. Parker, D. D., published some years since in Rochester, (N. Y.)

"It is essential to the very nature of a moral government, that there should be first a moral constitution of creatures, rendering them fit subjects of government; then laws adapted to this constitution; and, last of all, a *righteous* distribution of rewards and punishments." Page, 65. Very good—so I say, it must be a *righteous* distribution. Not a partial, nor revengeful one. But hear him again:—"Yet obligation would not be felt, nor laws become efficacious only in so far as their penal sanctions were regarded as *fixed and absolutely certain.*" Page 66. Good again. So far the Doctor is right, just what I intend to prove true. But will he adhere to this? Will he build his argument upon this platform, which he admits to be essential to make obligation to be felt, and laws efficacious? Let us see. "He forgives the *vilest* sinner without one reproachful word, only tenderly exhorting him to go and sin no more; while at the same time, he assures the *most unexceptionable moralist*, who is yet destitute of true religion, that he cannot escape the damnation of hell."—p. 62. This is his "moral government adapted to the constitution of man," his "righteous distribution of rewards and punishments" and "penalties *fixed* and *absolutely certain*"! But let the Doctor explain it farther. "The apparent force of this argument is lost, at once, if it be admitted that *both* (that is both classes) *alike deserve eternal punishment.* But this is admitted by those who hope to be saved because they conceive themselves to be spiritual disciples of Christ. They admit that they deserve eternal punishment as *really*

He cannot damn them all eternally to satisfy his justice; and at the same time, save them all to satisfy his

as those that actually suffer it"—p. 47. Such are his "*righteous* distributions," his "penalties absolutely certain and fixed," his "perfect government adapted to the moral nature of men." Is this the way virtue is encouraged and vice suppressed? No wonder the influence of this doctrine has broken down all distinctions between right and wrong; cherished perfidy, cruelty, and persecution; and made the crimes of those, who "conceived themselves the spiritual disciples" far more numerous, dark, and appalling than those of skeptics themselves. But have patience reader, the Doctor must speak again. "It is because *he* is about to show himself mighty to save, and to display in awful contrast, his redeeming mercy, and vindictive justice,"—p. 73. Here we have *redeeming mercy*, and *vindictive* (that is *revengeful*) justice, both in the character of a perfect being, and an "awful contrast" between them! Most awful indeed! Again says he, "God is now acting upon a principle, which exhibits alike an intention to show mercy to some, and to punish others,"—p. 64. Is this the character—the partiality of heaven? or is it the madness and folly of mortals? The Bible says, "God will render to *every* man according to his deeds." (Rom. 2, 6) Again, "Are not my ways equal, are not *your* ways unequal, saith the Lord," (Ezek. 18, 29.) Speaking of the Divine government, our author says, "That mercy and justice shall be eternally set over *against* each other,"—p. 71. *Against* each other! What need then of a Devil, if heaven is to be divided against itself, and God is to officiate in both capacities? Again, "This first intimation to the senses, of the nature of the divine government, might teach us to expect that justice and mercy should hereafter be set over *against* each other,"—p. 69. So it seems these attributes of God are to stand *opposed* to each other to all eternity! One demanding one thing and the other the contrary. I should like to know which is good and which bad. For if one is right, the other standing over against it, must be wrong, unless among Partialists, right and wrong are the same thing. Partialist writers generally hold out the same views on Justice and Mercy.

mercy. So it is supposed, he will display his justice by damning some; and his mercy by saving others. That justice here has its victims, and mercy there its subjects. And both of these principles are to take up with their half allowance as better than nothing! That those who are damned are damned unmercifully; and those who are saved are saved unjustly! That God is just to such as are damned, but not to such as are saved. And that he is merciful to such as are saved, but not to such as are damned. This makes him just to some and unjust to others; merciful to some, and unmerciful to others! This appears to me a great curiosity. A God divided against himself! Perfect goodness split into two parts, the one in exact opposition to the other! A spectacle for all rational beings to look upon and wonder.

3. But how did this mystery of mysteries come to be? How happened it, that justice and mercy should be both attributes of God, if they are exactly opposed to each other? Are they both good principles? So it is supposed. How then can they be exactly opposed to each other? Can one truth contradict another truth? Can goodness require that a thing be done, and goodness require that it be not done, at the same time? If justice and mercy are not both perfectly good principles, they could not both be attributes of a perfectly good God. If there is any wrong in either of them, then there would be some wrong in the character composed of their combination! If justice be a good principle, and no wrong in it, and God is a perfectly good being, he must be perfectly just to every being. And if mercy is good, and no wrong in it, must not God be perfectly merciful to every being? If justice is a good principle, and does require the endless punishment of all men, what *good* being could object to it? Why is not a good God willing to have it so? Is he willing to have it so by his justice; and unwilling to have it so by his mercy? Then he must be neither willing nor unwilling! Why should a *just* God send his *just* son, to save mankind from a *just*

punishment, and from his own just wrath? If endless punishment was just and right and good, how could any good being feel opposed to it? According to this theory, it would seem, that *its* devil has the greatest regard for justice of any being. For *he* is supposed to be desirous to have all men endlessly punished, as the theory says, they justly ought to be. If this thing called justice is a good principle, and requires the endless misery of all, why do not our good clergy pray that it may be the case? Why are they more desirous that mercy may prevail than justice, since they think them both good principles? yet exactly opposed to each other! Do they think their good mercy a little better than their good justice? If so, instead of each being curtailed by the other, the best should prevail to the total exclusion of the other. And if justice be not quite so good as mercy, all the justice there is in God must diminish so much from his perfection.

4. It is designed, that the reader, whatever he may be, if he possess common sense, shall be made heartily sick of the common notion, that Divine justice and mercy are opposite principles. For upon this gross absurdity, has been founded, almost the entire system of Popery, with the most essential corruptions of christianity in all ages. In the preceding chapter, I have defined justice to be always right; and mercy to be always right, when regulated by or not inconsistent with justice. A thief is arraigned and found guilty—justice would send him to the penitentiary; but it is said, mercy would save him. Why would justice consign him to prison? Not because it delights in misery, but because the public safety and security require it, and he has forfeited his right to liberty to the public good; and by a rule of justice adopted by the State for his good as well as that of others. If he should be suffered to escape, others might lose their property and suffer by him. Then mercy itself does not require that he escape. Mercy forbids that the rights of the whole community be jeopardised. Surely

mercy, looking with lenient eye upon all concerned, does not interfere with justice; nor exempt the offender from punishment. It could not be so cruel. Mercy, acting blindly and partially toward the criminal, might save him; but would violate its own nature towards others, so as to cease to be mercy, and become cruelty. But when mercy is viewed with reference to all its relations, it assimilates to justice and harmonizes with it. Exclusive compassion to the offender would consult his happiness, but involve the community in misery. Such compassion would be unjust and wrong, and cannot be like any attribute of God. But *real* mercy, which must embrace all considerations, in its good and kind aims, condemns the criminal, and thus promotes the greatest good of all concerned. Here, mercy and justice harmoniously combine in perfect *right*, and aim together at one and the same object—the greatest possible happiness of all.

5. So it will be perceived, that contracted or spurious mercy, which flows to some, regardless of the general good, may be unjust and wrong; but when acting with reference to the interests of all, it is right and just. Upon this ground they embrace and become one. They both aim at the greatest good which can be accomplished without sacrificing any rights. This must be exactly the character of Divine justice and Divine mercy. Hence they are both good principles in him; and both harmonize to form a perfect character. Hence God is infinitely just and infinitely merciful; perfectly just to all and perfectly merciful to all. This justice and mercy, divinely blended in all the inimitable beauty and glory of exalted loveliness and perfect good, regard the whole mass of kindred intelligences, with one great and impartial design of supreme benignity. He is, therefore emphatically "good unto all, and his tender mercies are over (not a part, but) all his works."—Psa. cliv. 9. And he is, "a just God and a saviour."—Isa. lv. 21.

He is just to all men and the saviour of all men. (See 1st Tim. 4, 10.) If a man has sinned, justice requires that he be punished, but no more than is necessary to accomplish the purpose for which the law is given, viz. to suppress sin and promote holiness; and thus to secure the greatest good of all concerned. And mercy requires the very same. Who will object? Who will dare so to define justice and mercy that they cannot harmonize in the Divine mind and character? Would any place the Deity upon a divided throne; so that the black fires of unsatisfied revenge, and the waters of capricious mercy shall wage eternal war, and rack his troubled soul with storms of contending passions? And then ask intelligent men to worship him? What christian would put up Satan upon one side, as a friend of justice, pleading like some State's Attorney, for this notion of justice, the endless damnation of all—and Jesus upon the other side, like a feed lawyer, pleading for the prostration of justice, and the claims of opposing mercy? And who will suppose, in this perplexing case, the Judge, at last, gives a part to justice and Satan; and the rest to mercy and Jesus, to satisfy in part the claims of both? Yet this notion, preposterous and absurd as it is, has been the prevailing theory of christendom for ages! To support it, ponderous volumes have been written; art and genius have been exhausted; and herculean efforts have been made in its defence. Yet it *cannot be true;* and it confuses all conceptions of justice, and results in nothing practical or useful; but perplexes honest inquirers and promotes skepticism.

6. God is just—nothing more and nothing less. We expect to be punished as much as we deserve, because it is just, and should be so. We would avoid sin because it will justly bring misery. Those who think their neighbors' sins justly deserve endless punishment, should reflect that they may be partial judges. And these, who think their own merits justly deserve endless hap-

piness, doubtless charge more for them than they are worth. Rewards and punishments relate to actions, and must be exactly graduated by their degrees of merit and demerit, in order to be just. But such favors as God is disposed to confer on men, unconnected with their actions and independent of them, are just, not as a reward, but as a just gift. Our present existence is a gift not a reward. So will be our final endless being. An immortal and happy existence may be a just gift, but cannot be a reward. A reward is just reciprocity or remuneration. But a free gift is benevolence; and is just when the rights of none are violated by it. A father has a just right to give his son a farm, after he has rewarded him according to his actions, if in so doing he does injustice to none else. Some say, if Heaven is to be a *just* gift, that is, something for man after he has received just rewards and punishments, we shall have nothing to thank God for! As if the dark and ungrateful soul could never feel thankful for any thing which was right—for any thing but a violation of justice—a deliverance from punishment, which in moral right he ought to suffer! I think this high and sublime principle of moral justice, which characterizes the Deity, is most worthy of thanks. I think the heavenly hosts would never praise God for doing injustice—I can only feel thankful for justice (rightly understood;) and I must despise injustice, because it is always wrong. So I think, the incorruptible inhabitants of heaven, can never admire that partial clemency, which saves them, when they ought in justice to be damned. How preposterous to make the eternal Father of the universe unjust—and his saints unjust, so that they cannot be grateful for aught but injustice! And all unjust except Satan! If these popular notions of justice were correct, I should not wonder that Satan rebelled against the Divine government. For if he admired justice, (as it is thought he did) and found it disregarded in the monarchy of Heaven,

I should not expect him to yield a filial obedience. Hence his own great bard has made him to say, "he had rather reign in hell, than serve in Heaven."*

*I here offer a Note from Dr. Clark's Com. to show how careless the Doctor sometimes was, when he forgot his own creed, and wished to trouble the dark waters of Calvinism. On the text 1st John, 3, 8, he says, "*God is love.* An infinite fountain of benevolence and beneficence to every human being. He hates nothing he has made. He cannot *hate* because he is *love.* He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good; and sends his rain on the just and the unjust. He has made no human being for perdition; nor ever rendered it impossible by any necessitating decree, for any fallen soul to find mercy. He has given the fullest proof of his love to the whole human race, by the incarnation of his son, who tasted death for every man. How can a decree of absolute, unconditional reprobation of the greater part or *any* part of the human race, stand in the presence of such a text as this? It has been well observed, that although God is holy, just, righteous, &c., he is never called *holiness, justice,* &c., in the *abstract,* as he is here called LOVE. *This* seems to be the *essence* of the Divine nature: and *all other attributes to be only modifications* of this."

Now, according to the Doctor's own creed, the millions who happen to die unconverted, must be consigned to endless torments in hell. Well, according to the above Note, God will do this without hating them at all, by his justice, which is only a modification of *love!* An "infinite fountain of benevolence" will punish men in this way! We must think the Doctor inadvertently let out the truth above, forgetting his own creed, in his honest zeal.

CHAPTER II.

FOR WHAT PURPOSE DID JESUS CHRIST COME INTO THE WORLD?

FROM what has been said in the foregoing chapters, it will appear that moral justice requires every individual to receive according to his deserts. And that it will in no case dispense with what it does require. And forsooth, if any one doctrine is more clearly taught in the holy scriptures, than another, it is this, that "GOD WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY," but that he "WILL RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS." From this conclusion, the following questions arise, which we propose to answer in the light of the Bible and reason. 1. For what purpose came Jesus into the world? 2. What was the use of his death? 3. What is the object of repentance and reformation? And 4, What is [illegible] by forgiveness of sins?

1. For what purpose then came the Saviour into the world? We must conclude God was just, and therefore, did not send him into the world to do injustice. And that Jesus was just, and therefore did not come to do any thing that was unjust. But on the contrary, as God was just, he sent his son, who revered justice, to do justice; that is, to do that which would result in the greatest perfection and happiness of all concerned. He said he "came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it." Now what does the law require? Answer: The obedience of all moral beings. If Jesus lived in perfect obedience, it would only fulfil the law so far as *he* was personally concerned. This would be only what the law

required *him* to do. But in order to fulfil the whole law, that, "not one jot or tittle of it should fail," he must cause all men to become obedient. The whole law will never be fulfiled, until every subject obeys it. Hence, it is not intimated in the Bible, that he came to save any body from just punishment; but to save mankind from their *sins*. The angel said, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." —Matt. i. 21. Again, it is said, that, "He was manifested to take away our sins." "To destroy the works of the devil." "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." "The Father loveth the son and hath given all things into his hand."—John iii. 35. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."—John, vi. 37–40. The general implication of the Bible upon this subject, is, that Christ, from his regard to moral purity, and his love to our race, has undertaken to redeem us from the love of sin, and cleanse us from all impurity. He is not to force us into submission against our will; for that would be only outward submission, and of no use. But he is to work at the *will* itself. Our perverse will is the very thing that needs to be subdued. Let him but subdue our evil passions and corrupt dispositions, and then our *will* will be right. To talk of Christ's saving us from our sins, whenever we *will* to be thus saved, is to say, he will save us from them, whenever we save ourselves from them. This is to change a bad will, after that will has already become a good one. A physician says he will cure me, if I will first get well! If Christ waits till the sinner's will is right, before he saves him from sin, he will then be already saved from sin, which is a bad will; and would need no assistance to accomplish what

is done already. Christ designs then to work upon the perverse *will* by moral influence; reaching it not by outward force, but in accordance with the laws of mind.

2. This work of subduing the will and bringing it into a full and happy submission to God, is the very thing which man needs, and which Jesus has undertaken to do. And the whole system of the Gospel, in all its parts, are but the means directed by the spirit of God for accomplishing this purpose. The *purpose* ultimately to be accomplished, is expressed by Paul, thus, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath PURPOSED in himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him."—Eph. i. 9–10. This is the grand object of the Gospel of Christ. His doctrine—his precepts—his example—his death—his resurrection—his ministry—his moral kingdom on earth—and the agency of his spirit, are all designed to co-operate in promoting this object. Not to make men good when they will to be good, but to make them *will* to be so. Paul declares the purpose again in these words, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."—1st Tim. ii. 4. It is true that the will of God often implies his law. But here, it evidently implies his irresistible *purpose;* because both the means and the end are embraced—both the knowledge of the truth as the means, and the salvation as the end. Hence, punishment, so far from being the unhappy fate of such as Jesus neglects, is also one of the means used to make them the subjects of his moral kingdom. As says Paul, "For they verily for a few days, chasten us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of right*eousness* unto them which are exercised thereby."—

Heb. xii. 10–11. So when man has sinned, it is better for him to receive the necessary punishment; yet it would have been better for him not to have sinned so as to make it necessary. It may be well for a person to have a fractured limb amputated; yet it would have been better for him not to have fractured it, and thus made the amputation necessary. Although mankind shall be made to submit to God; yet this compulsion shall be effected in such a manner, that it shall be perfectly voluntary with them. Surely we are free moral agents; yet God has not given us an agency, which he cannot control. God knows how to use this very agency for the accomplishment of his purposes, as well as every thing else he has made. If we abhor an object from our souls, because of our unjust prejudices against it, the moment we are undeceived, and that object appears in its true character, we love it. Our will is conquered, and our heart is captivated to the object of our new affections. Here, is the compulsion of influence on the one hand, positive and irresistible; and free voluntary affection and devotion on the other. So when a man comes to a knowledge of the truth, that truth makes him free, but only free to love God and his fellow beings. He feels that he is perfectly free, yet an invisible and mighty power of influence, moves the hidden springs of action. His whole heart and all its deep fountains are broken up, and its affections sweetly attracted and charmed by the beauty and glory of truth. By the irresistible energy of this all conquering influence, mankind are to be made to submit themselves, in free and spontaneous worship of the Most High. As says the Psalmist, "Through the greatness of thy power, shall thine enemies submit *themselves* unto thee—all the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing unto thy name."—Psa. lxvi. 3, 4. Jesus came then to teach the truth—to reveal the character and designs of God—to develope the principles and beauties of moral virtue—to exemplify these pure and exalted prin-

ciples in his life—and to impart the joyous hope of a final immortality and glory to affliction's hapless children. And thus to reform, refine, and exalt our condition here; and mingle the virtues, and beams, and joys of Heaven, on the dark seas of earthly corruption and wo. Hail! Prince of Peace! Great conqueror of sin! Onward be thy triumphs; and the last victory achieved be thine.

3. Justice, which is founded in the fitness and relation of things, approves this high and exalted purpose Mercy and benevolence are deeply engaged in its success. The prayers of all christians—the holy desires of all Heaven—the breathing sympathies of all the good—the deep and boundless affinity, that pervades heaven and earth, and all that is pure and lovely, are engaged in the success and triumph of Jesus.

> The *just*, the *good*, of every age,
> Breathe forth one wish, one prayer to God,
> That all dark sin, may cease to rage,
> And crimes all end, in boundless good.
> Vast ardent hope, and pure desire,
> God's own bright image, in the mind,
> A spark from Heaven's eternal fire,
> Of boundless love, for all mankind.

But the Goblin spirit of evil is opposed to it. All that is bitter and selfish in man is opposed to it. See the dark cloud that comes from the cold mountains of ignorance and malice, contaminating the moral atmosphere; and pouring the wintry breeze of bigotry over the human heart, to wither all the sacred feelings of nature; and to blight all the tender charities and holy sympathies of man. From this cloud of fanaticism, comes the poisoned breath of intolerance, more baleful than the blasting Simoon. Its pathway is crimsoned with rivers of blood—its tender mercies are deep unending agony—its music the shrieks of endless despair—and its widest wish and brightest hope, the immortal damnation

of mankind. Many sincere believers in this doctrine have no feelings in unison with it; but to them it is a source of unmingled grief. But I have known many that seemed to exult in the idea! To such I say, ye bigots of every sect—ye, who paint yourselves in the forms of sanctity, but detest all religion which does not exempt you from all punishment, and burn your fellow beings forever—you, who reckon the ceaseless pains of your race, the crowning glory of religion—have you no hearts to feel? Are you turned to rock? Are all the springs of natural humanity dried up in your breasts, by the scorching flames of your vindictive and cruel system? Are you transformed to demons of revenge, that you can exult in the prospect of endless wo? And thus wash your hands in the blood of millions that your brethren have shed? Oh, for words that can penetrate the darkness and frost that enwrap your spirits. Do you love your endless Hell? Do you love to look forward, and see your dearest kindred writhing in pain? Your brethren of the Inquisition loved it too. They loved to begin the glorious fires on earth. They exulted around their shrieking dying victims. The fires of fifty million heretics warmed their pious hearts to extacy, and gave them a joyous foretaste of that sublimated bliss, which they expected to derive from the torments of the damned. Oh God of love, when shall be broken the marble chains, which bigotry has hung around nature, and its purest, holiest, and tenderest sympathies? Let the darkness of a hundred ages fall; and with it, let the blood of martyrs be washed from the christian name. And let *thy* kingdom come, in its light and truth, and love and peace; that man may no longer live in distrust of man; but hand in hand, heart in heart, and soul in soul, find his happiness but a part of that bliss designed for all; and only live to love, and be beloved.

CHAPTER IV.

FOR WHAT PURPOSE DID CHRIST DIE? THE COMMON NOTION OF ATONEMENT REFUTED; AND THE TRUE OBJECT OF THE SAVIOUR'S DEATH EXPLAINED.

It has been assumed that all men justly deserved endless punishment. This is the false foundation on which the whole superstructure of error has rested. Almost the whole Christian world have built upon this foundation a system of vicarious atonement, as repugnant to reason and common sense as can be conceived. But it is a necessary result of their false premises. For if every man deserved endless hell, every man must have it, or some other plan must be devised to satisfy justice as well. But theologians, however fond they might be of fire, have always felt disposed to keep themselves and some others out of it. For this reason it became necessary for them to invent a substitute for justice! A substitute for justice forsooth,—what a contrivance it must be! Let us look it in the face. First, they teach that divine justice, like a vindictive cloud, darkened all heaven, and was bearing down like a storm upon all our race, to engulph us all in hell. This was a dreadful doom. Angels looked on and were about to weep. Jesus looked on in pity. He knew he could suffer as much in a few hours as all men could suffer in eternal ages. He generously offered to be punished in our stead, as a substitute; and in his own person satisfy the full demands of justice.

2. This scheme implies that the endless punishment *of all men* would have been perfectly just and right. If

so, why was not God satisfied with it? Why wish to substitute any thing for what was perfectly just and right? This is truly a great mystery. But justice could not be satisfied in this way. It could not accept what it did *not* require as a substitute for what it *did* require. By the supposition, it required the suffering of the guilty, and not the innocent. If God was offended with man, and thirsted for revenge, and was so regardless of all principle, that he could be appeased with *any* kind of suffering, whether just or unjust, then any thing would satisfy him, provided there were groans, and tears, and blood enough in it. But if a moral principle was to be carried out, nothing could accomplish this but the just punishment of the guilty which it required. Now if the guilty escape, that is unjust; and if the innocent suffer instead of the guilty, that is again unjust. Now it is supposed justice required the endless punishment of the guilty, but they are permitted to escape. Here, then, we have *one* injustice. Again, the innocent suffer what the guilty justly ought to suffer. Here we have *another* injustice. Now it is thought these *two* acts of injustice *together* are a very good substitute for justice! Is it indeed true, that injustice becomes justice by being *doubled?* If so, it would be best to double all the injustice in the world, and that would make universal justice; double all the sin, and make universal holiness; double all the misery, and make universal salvation; and, indeed, double all the absurdities of a paganized, benighted church, and they would all become sound and rational! If these things are not to be done in that way, how can justice be satisfied with the acquittal of those it condemns, and the punishment of whom it does not condemn? How can justice be satisfied with *two* things, which are *both* unjust, instead of *one* that is just? If endless punishment is justly due to all men, the debt can never be paid till they all receive it. Paul says, "The wages of sin is death." These wages are due to the sinner who earned them, not to God. Now can a debt

be paid to whom it is not due, instead of being paid to whom it is due? Reader, suppose I owe you one thousand dollars for a farm. But instead of paying you the money, I pay it to my son, would you think the debt justly paid, and justice satisfied? Or would you not think me still indebted to you as much as ever? Suppose a Calvinist clergyman has been preaching to his flock till they owe him five hundred dollars salary. I come to them and say, here, gentlemen, pay his wages to me; for although they are not due to me, yet I am *willing* to receive them as his substitute; for justice will be equally satisfied when the debt is paid, whether it be paid where it is due, or where it is not due. Would not the clergyman be apt to think, "this alters the case," and that it was unjust for them to pay the money to me, and again unjust not to pay it to him? Suppose they answer, "You have taught us, sir, that to do what justice forbids, and not to do what it requires, are together exactly equal to doing what it requires." The poor parson would be likely to discover that moral justice and orthodox justice were two different things.

3. Again: If justice did require the endless punishment of all men, and Jesus suffered as their substitute, his sufferings must have been equal to that, unless the principle could be satisfied with less than it required; and if it could, it might as well be satisfied with none. If withholding from justice a part of its demand would be just, then the withholding its whole demand would be just. Hence it was thought necessary to have an infinite sacrifice and suffering to be a substitute for the infinite punishment which all men are made to deserve. And as none could suffer infinitely in a few hours time, but an infinite being, it is next devised that Jesus Christ is God, and that the great Jehovah really died to make an infinite sacrifice, to cover an infinite evil, to satisfy an infinite dissatisfaction, and to appease an infinite wrath! Such absurdities arise, one upon another, like hills on hills to mountain heights, from beginning wrong, and

assuming in the outset, that sin deserves endless punishment.

4. If justice could be satisfied with what it did not require, what could be gained by this theory? Nothing at all. Jesus suffers as much as the endless misery of all men, as their substitute. Well, if so, there was as much misery in the case as if all men had gone to hell. Then no good is accomplished in the case. The misery is moved from those who justly ought to suffer it, and placed upon one who justly ought not to suffer it. Nothing is gained to humanity or philanthropy in the case. Justice still has its victim. Might it not better have had its own proper victim, than to have violated its immutable nature, in accepting a victim not its own without diminishing a whit from the sum of misery? It is to be wished that our doctors could answer such questions. A man has murdered—justice demands his punishment; a friend offers to be punished in his place. Would this satisfy justice? It diminishes no suffering, but the blow falls on the innocent instead of the guilty; that is, the thing is done which ought not to be done, instead of that which ought to be. Where is the wonderful display of mercy in this scheme, so much lauded? None—none; all is inflexible wrath, going into full execution; but instead of going where it ought to go, it goes where it ought not to go.

5. But yet the theory says, all who do not repent shall be endlessly damned nothwithstanding! Ah! then the endless misery of all this class is to be so much in addition to the sum of misery which would have been without the atonement. If it be true that Jesus suffered as much as justice required for the sins of all men, and justice accepted such substitute, then no man could be justly punished at all. For if, as the theory teaches, the whole debt is paid by proxy, there can remain nothing unpaid. And if any should be endlessly punished, their endless punishment would be so much more than even this kind of justice required. This theory has been

lauded by millions as an astonishing display of Divine wisdom, goodness, and mercy! But surely, if such be a Bible theory, the writer could never reconcile the Bible with common sense.

6. These difficulties have arisen, in part, from the erroneous supposition, that the unchangeable God was exasperated with men on account of their sins; and this scheme has been devised as the means of appeasing his wrath, and making it possible for him to love and pardon sinners. So it is assumed that the atonement produced God's reconciliation and love to the world. But, it may be asked, if the atonement produced the love of God to the world, what produced the atonement? Did the wrath of God produce the atonement, and the atonement his love? Yonder savage says to his son, "My enemy has provoked my deep and unrelenting hate. Nothing but blood can feast my vengeance and placate my burning soul. Stand up, my son, and receive this knife into your heart, to appease my wrath, and save the guilty wretch from my just revenge." Would not common sense conclude the father to be mad indeed? But the Bible says, "God so *loved* the world that he gave his only begotton son," &c. John iii, 16. And again, "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." Rom. v, 8. So it appears that God loved the world before the atonement was made. Hence the Saviour did not die to appease the divine wrath, nor to purchase the love of God for men.

7. We will here examine an argument, often adduced by the advocates of a vicarious atonement to illustrate the justice, propriety and beauty of the system. It runs thus: "A certain king enacted a law that whoever among his subjects should commit a certain crime, should have his eyes both taken out as a punishment. And it so happened that the first person who committed the crime was the king's own son. In terror and chagrin the king reflects on the awful subject. He wishes to save his

dear son, (better than other men's sons of course,) and yet his law must be honored. At last he hits upon the expedient to take out one of his own eyes and one of his son's, and in this way fulfil the law." Now, this is thought by many controversialists to be a beautiful illustration of substitution. No doubt it well illustrates the substitution of wrong for right, but it fails entirely to show that wrong is right, which is the thing to be done in order to justify vicarious punishment. If the law was a good one, then it would have been right to execute it as it was, and, consequently, wrong not to do it. The king's expedient did not by any means execute the law. Had the law required that the criminal should lose either one or both eyes, then it would have been executed, whether the old man lost an eye or not. The extraction of the father's eye was no part of the execution of the law, for the law did not require it. And the saving of one of the son's eyes, was in violation of the law which did require it to be extracted. Had the law required that the criminal should sacrifice *two eyes*, either his own, or some other, then this would do; but in that case he might as well have offered two dog's eyes, as his own and his father's. But the law required him to lose both his *own* eyes; and no other eyes would do. Though ten thousand friends might be willing to sacrifice their eyes, this would be something unrequired by the law, and of course would not satisfy its demands at all. If a penal law can be satisfied with what it does not require, then it could be satisfied with the unqualified acquittal of the guilty. It reminds us of the convicted Irishman, who was sentenced to death, (as the story goes,) but was finally allowed to choose his manner of death. He gravely informed the court, that upon mature deliberation, he had chosen to die of old age! Now all the above is sincerely believed to be correct reasoning on the subject; and it is submitted, with all due respect, to all Christians believing in vicarious atonement, in the ardent hope that unsophisticated truth may tri-

umph over the antiquated whims of the dark ages of the church. And may the bright day soon come when Christianity shall be relieved from the degrading imputation of substituting injustice for justice, sophistry for truth, wrong for right, and the dark visions of monkish barbarism for common sense and practical virtue.

II. I now come to explain the true object of the Saviour's death. Jesus Christ possessed human nature—was often hungry, thirsty, weary, and cold. He possessed a human constitution and organization, and was subject to all the infirmities, privations, pains, and agonies that "flesh is heir to." He was as much exposed to the action of all the elements as we are; grew in stature and advanced in age. In a word, he possessed a physical, organic, animal, and mortal constitution as much as any of us. "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. iv. 15. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the *likeness* of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."—Phil. ii. 7, 8. "And the word was made *flesh* and dwelt among us."—John i. 14. As Jesus was, to all intents and purposes, possessed of a human body, he was necessarily subject to death. He was emphatically mortal, and from the very constitution of his existence must have died ultimately, had he lived in an age of justice and toleration. Had he not been constitutionally mortal, he could not have been put to death by all the power of "wicked hands," nor all the bloody efforts of misguided zeal. But being found in the fashion of man, that is, being mortal, he humbled himself unto death; or became obedient unto death—the law of his physical and organic existence.

2. But the *form* and *manner* of his death were intimately connected with the great moral enterprise of heaven, in redeeming man from sin, and bringing the

wandering, sin-stained pilgrims of earth to the love and practice of virtue, the worship of God, and the fruition of their final exalted destiny. The object of his death was not to appease God's wrath, but to bring us to God. For *this cause* "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, *that he might bring us to God.*"—1 Pet. iii. 18. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, *in bringing many sons unto glory*, to make the captain of their salvation perfect, *through sufferings.*"—Heb. ii. 10. "For if, when we were enemies, we were *reconciled* to God, *by the death of his son.*"—Rom. v. 10. The martyred Warren, who bled in freedom's cause, or the brave Montgomery, who fell before Quebec, would have died in the course of nature, had their bosoms not burned with patriotic fire, and had they not attempted the enterprise of human liberty. But in that case, their deaths would have been no links in that chain of events which liberated this country. They would not have been the consecrated sacrifices to a nation's good, nor embalmed in the sacred archives of a nation's memory. So the death of Christ, in its *form* and *manner* was a glorious confirmation of the moral precepts he taught. His whole life was an example of patience, forbearance, and resignation —the moral image of God. He had taught men to love their enemies; he had repudiated those principles of revenge which had involved mankind in blood and crime through all ages; and had brought out to view the new and bright light of mercy, and kindness, and justice. His principles are now to be tested. Will he act out his own theory, and evince the morals of heaven? Or has he only amused the world with the sublime creations of fancy? The awful trial is at hand—the murderous group assembles—every face flashes vindictive wrath—every heart burns for vengeance—every soul labors with deadliest hate and cruelest purpose. There stands the meek image of God, resplendent in the moral panoply of his own divine principles. He sees the gathering storm—

a kind tear wets his cheek—apprehension heaves his bosom—bloody drops appear—his soul communes with God—he is resigned. He is scourged, and crowned with thorns, and mocked—his hands and feet are nailed—his side pierced with a soldier's spear. Behold there, this great reformer's system. On the bloody cross he holds it up to his murderers and to all mankind. He forgives them all! O what a conquest was that! Heaven saw the triumphs of Divine Love, and the bright world thrilled with boundless sympathy. The system is tested. Its immortal principles are established. They must advance onward till they renovate the world. His affecting dying prayer for his enemies was a bright and crowning example to all generations. It was a finishing touch in the moral grandeur of that character, which was to exert an influence and energy upon distant nations and ages, and co-operate with the whole system of Christian means in reconciling mankind to their Father and God. And his resurrection from the dead laid the foundation of hope for all believers, and brought life and immortality to light. He died as a martyr to Christianity. He so loved the world that he pitied their ignorance, and attempted to reform them, although he foresaw the tempest, that it would gather over his head. He reached out his hand to save them from their sinful ways. He breathed out the philanthropy of his kind heart, and the pure and benignant spirit of heaven upon the benighted and ferocious generations of men, although he knew it would kindle a fire in the marble-hearted bigots of Israel, and bring the ruthless vengeance of a perverted and cruel age upon his own person. As the hero of heaven's truth and love, he entered upon the great drama of mental and moral emancipation, and presented his bosom to the shafts of an infatuated world. This is no fancy sketch; it is all sober, affecting reality. What tender mercy and loving kindness in all his acts! What facinating amiableness—what exalted beauty and loveliness in all he did! How incomparable above the devel-

opements of human ambition! What a moral sublimity and glory in the last tragic scene! What grandeur in the breaking slumber of death, and the beam of joyous hope, rising in immortal radiance upon the human mind, and lighting up the smiles of cheering and blissful anticipation over the horrors of the tomb! Hail thou martyred, risen, exalted model of all that is good, great, magnanimous and lovely! May thy triumphs be equal to thy vast designs, and transform the encrimsoned scenes of earth into abodes of peace, and mankind to kindred beings in the participation of harmony and love.

3. There are, indeed, passages of Scripture which might be interpreted to imply that Christ did die to appease the divine wrath, and that he suffered as a substitute for man. But as such an idea is irrational and absurd, and as all such passages will bear the rational exposition exhibited above, we are bound so to understand them. In this sense, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Not that he so hated the world, that he gave his Son to make it possible for him to love it. In this sense he "tasted death for every man," because he suffered death in his ardent devotion to our interests, and all his efforts were to save us from our errors and miseries. As our country is figuratively said to be saved from British despotism by the blood of our fathers, so in the same figurative sense it is said that we are saved from sin by the blood of Christ. We may say, figuratively, that the blood of our fathers hath saved us from bondage, and cleansed us from all allegiance to despotism. So we may say "the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin." And let it be remembered that the blood which was spilt upon the earth, can be said to cleanse from sin *only* in a figurative sense. Surely, none suppose blood can *literally* wash away sin. Expressions still more highly tropical often occur. For instance, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of God and drink his blood, you have no life in you." "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me,

and I in him." Numerous passages of like import might be adduced to show how metaphorically the blood of Christ is spoken of generally. The precepts and doctrines of Christ may cleanse from sin, and as his blood was spilt in the vindication and inculcation of these precepts and doctrines, we refer figuratively to that blood as the efficient cause of our deliverance and salvation from sin. In this figurative sense he is the propitiation for our sins. In this sense "he bore our sins and our iniquities," was "wounded for our transgressions," and "by his stripes we are healed," &c.* His death was a martyrdom—the voluntary martyrdom of a pure and exalted person, for the improvement and happiness of his mur-

*There is a passage in Isaiah, Chap. liii, 5, which has been supposed to teach the vicarious sufferings of our saviour. It reads thus, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Also v. 6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." We should examine this in the light reflected upon it by Matthew viii. 16, 17. "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils; and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." By this it will be perceived, that the sense, in which our Saviour took our infirmities and bare our diseases, was by casting out the evil spirits and healing us. This seems the true sense of the Atonement. He is the moral physician, we the morally sick. And as he heals us, the figurative style of antiquity, represents him to take our infirmities upon himself. And as the moral physician suffered death in applying the remedy, the Bible diction sometimes presents his sufferings as a substitute for ours. But I contend, that my interpretation of all such language above, is the only interpretation that well accords with reason or common sense.

derers and enemies. There is a story of an unfortunate man, who beheld a ship driven upon the rocks. The people on board were in imminent peril. Their shrieks and screams reached his ear, and he generously risked his life in the cause of humanity. He mounted a high-spirited horse, swam to the ship, and by brave and extraordinary efforts, brought several of them to shore. But at last, by venturing too much, in his great anxiety to save, he was himself drowned! Would not the grateful throng, delivered by his generous hand, say he had laid down his life for them? Were they not saved by his death? Figuratively speaking they were. His philanthropy saved them at the expense of his own life. He did not know that his benevolent exertions would cost him so much; but so strong was his sympathy that he was willing to risk all for others. And the Saviour resigned his life upon the dark ocean of human frailty, that he might raise our race from the overwhelming scourge of sin and wo. It sealed his virtues and doctrines with sacred blood. It confirmed and perfected his system, and was thus a link in that golden chain of everlasting kindness, which connects the beginning and end of creation, and allies the myriads of all our race in the grand design of ultimate purity, felicity, and glory.

Not to appease his Father's ire,
Did Jesus come, and shed his blood;
No, not to quench eternal fire,
But reconcile the world to God.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT IS THE USE OF REPENTANCE AND REFORMATION, IF ALL ARE TO BE PUNISHED AS MUCH AS THEY DESERVE?

To answer this question fairly, it seems necessary to recapitulate some of the principles advanced, and, as I think sustained in the preceding chapters. 1. That Moral Justice always aims at the greatest good of all concerned, which possibly can be accomplished, without infringing upon the rights of any. And 2d. That Rewards and Punishments are but the means, which moral justice employs, to accomplish that object. From these premises, it follows, that whenever the object of punishment is obtained, Justice requires no more. Punishment is amendatory, but the reformation of the sinner is not *all* that punishment is designed to accomplish. It has other objects, as will appear in the sequel. In human governments, repentance cannot be certainly ascertained—moreover, it is often necessary to punish the felon as an example to others. But in the Divine economy, which is founded in the very perfection of moral principles, the object of amendatory punishment is obtained, whenever the sinner is effectually reformed. Justice, so far as its object was reformation, is then satisfied. And the sinner has then received, of amendatory punishment, all he deserved, according to his deeds—that is, as much of that kind of punishment, as justice required, in his case, under such circumstances. But here it should be carefully observed, that although the penitent and reformed sinner is not to be afflicted any more for the purpose of amendation, yet he may be still

justly punished for other purposes. The felon may be punished for the purpose of detering others. The justice of this originates in the social law, made for his good as well as that of others. And many natural consequences of our actions growing out of nature's laws, must and will continue in spite of reformation. If the drunkard reforms, he enjoys the blessings of temperance afterwards; but he cannot recover the time and property he lost by dissipation. These are lost, and lost forever. I hold that all sin and its consequences are positive evils. And the happiness actually lost by them, is so much diminished from the whole amount we might have enjoyed, had we not sinned; and of course is an eternal loss. But this is an entire different thing from positive endless pain. Every moment of happiness which we lose, is irrecoverably lost, still we may be happy at a future time notwithstanding. The spendthrift, who has wasted half his estate by prodigality, may save the rest by reformation; but he cannot save what is lost. The debauchee, who has impaired his health and constitution by improper habits, may often improve it by reformation: but he will suffer much of the consequences of his folly after he is reformed. The wicked parent, who corrupted and perverted the heart of his child, by bad example and precept, may set better examples to his younger children and sometimes counteract, in part, the effects of his vile course upon the elder; but he will be apt to suffer much from the vice and wretchedness, which he has contributed to entail upon his child, after his own reformation. If one has chosen to starve and suffer in a barren and dreary country for ten years of his life, he may fare better in future by moving to a more productive and salubrious place; but he cannot avoid the sufferings necessarily incident to his former condition. The happiness he lost then is lost forever—and the misery he suffered there is so much diminished from his enjoyment. Therefore the sooner he moves to a more hospitable and friendly clime the better—for it is a clear

saving. So the sinner in all cases, must necessarily suffer much misery in and by reason of the pursuit of vice; and for this very reason, the sooner he repents and reforms, the better it is for him.

2. Sin and misery are related, in a qualified sense, as cause and effect. This is the reason why reformation from sin is necessary for the sinner's happiness. If sin would not infallibly result in misery to the sinner himself, reformation would not be necessary. That is, we could then commit the sin, and escape the consequences, so that reformation would not be essential to our best good. But as sin often makes the innocent unhappy, and in its consequences, always brings misery upon the guilty, in various forms and ways, God has commanded us to reform that we may be happy. For the same reason, he has threatened punishment; and for the same reason he will execute it. Hence it is in kindness and love that God requires us not to sin; and to reform when we have sinned; and that he punishes and will punish us for the violation of those commands. All is morally just in God; and it will be just also for him to discontinue the punishment when we are reformed; and all its other objects are accomplished. Hence, Jesus tells the sinful Jews, in reference to those whose blood Pilate mingled with the sacrifices, "Except ye repent (reform) ye shall all likewise perish." Luke xiii, 1, 2. Meaning, that unless these people should reform, without a signal retribution, they would deserve and receive some similar judgment, and would perish in a similar manner. He did not threaten them with endless torments to induce them to repent; but he held up to them an example of limited punishment, even in this life, a special temporal calamity; and reminded them, that a similar fate awaited them if they did not reform. It is said by the Apostle, that "The goodness of God leadeth to repentance." Rom. ii, 4. It is not that false idea of goodness which remits the punishment we justly ought to receive, that leadeth to repentance—not a blind compassion, which

disregards all right and all justice; but it is a sense of that exalted and perfect goodness of God, whereby as a gracious Father, he chastises his children, that leads our grateful hearts to adore that great and perfect Being; and shrink from the contemplation of the ungrateful and vicious course we have pursued.

3. If a person is so infatuated as to burn his fingers voluntarily, he must feel the smart in spite of repentance. But by repentance, he will desist, and avoid the smart that he would suffer by continuing his hand in the fire. So by a moral reformation, we may avoid those sufferings, that a continuance in sin would bring upon us; although we cannot escape many of the consequences of those sins already committed.

4. But on the ground, that sin is in itself pleasurable, as it sometimes is to some extent, and that endless punishment is its just award, as has too long been taught, then indeed, there would be no use in repentance. Let us prove this position. When the sinner has committed only one sin, he justly deserves endless wo, upon that theory. And should he go to endless hell, he could only be punished for that first sin, and all his subsequent transgressions must necessarily go unpunished. For the second offence could never begin to be punished, because it would take forever to punish the first. As every sinner, therefore, upon this theory, justly deserves endless hell, his repentance, which could only prevent further wickedness, could not affect the demands of justice for the past; nor diminish at all his just exposure to endless perdition. If justice must have its demand, he must be damned endlessly for his first sin; and if its demand can be waived—then it may, by the same rule, be waived, let him sin ever so long or so much. So he might better take his sinful pleasures, and waive all the endless hells he would deserve.

5. But as all men are to be punished justly, not endlessly, for sin, and as repentance is the first step of refor-

mation, it is necessary that all repent, that they may cease to sin and suffer. Universal salvation implies universal reformation—or rather, it *is* universal reformation. If all do not reform, all will not be saved; for reformation and gospel salvation are one and the same thing. But to persuade all men to reform is the work of Jesus, as already shown. The first admonition from him is, "Reform—for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The whole gospel of our Lord, in all its power and energy, is directed to this end. And shall we say, because he will succeed and accomplish the glorious enterprise, it is therefore unnecessary to be done? Is it unnecessary for the sun to rise to-morrow, if it will in fact rise? Ten men are confined in a gloomy dungeon. One awakes in the morning and addresses his comrades thus: "My friends, I have good tidings of great joy which shall be to all of you. This night, the Governor has told me, that our prison door is open; and that we have permission to go out. He says we shall certainly all be delivered, by voluntarily leaving this dungeon, and shall all go and see our friends, and enjoy liberty again." One replies: "What—*all* go out! Is it certain that *all will* go out? If all will certainly go, it is no matter whether any of us do or not." Another says, "Indeed! If it be certain that we shall all go, we never will go a step. We never wish to get out, if *all* are going!" The former answers: "Why—would you wish to stay here? Are you not miserable? And have you not been begging a long time, that we might all be let out?" They reply: "Yes—but we did not wish to have it *certain* that *all* would be let out. We only begged to have them all let out, but that is a different thing from being *sure* that they would be. We won't go at all if all are certainly going, because there can be no motive for going—no inducement." Now so long as these poor partialist prisoners should choose to remain, because the deliverance of all was certain, they would suf-

fer all the miseries of their situation; but nevertheless, they might finally learn to reason more correctly; and even their miseries themselves, might finally become so intolerable, as to induce them to repent their foolish resolution, and leave the prison in spite of the fact that all would be delivered.

6. Many seem to consider repentance as a kind of personal sacrifice to appease divine wrath. To "cease to do evil, and learn to do well" is not thought sufficient. But a kind of penance must be performed. The ceremony of repenting and weeping and agonizing must be submitted to, as if there was some mysterious merit in the number of sighs heaved and tears shed. And often a seat is prepared for the operation; and the very *modus operandi* clearly pointed out. As if this tended to appease and propitiate the divine Being. And what motive is generally presented to induce men to perform this repenting ceremony? Oh, to escape hell of course. That is the object. What could they do without hell? Well, suppose one performs all this ceremony to escape hell. He loves sin, but rather repent than go to hell. Who would not? How much better is he at heart? The fear of hell may induce him to perform certain rites; but does it warm his heart with the love of christian virtue? He hates it, but hates hell a little more. Fear of punishment may restrain men from the commission of crimes. That is its true business, but it cannot make men truly good. Repentance has been performed as a reluctant means of escaping hell, leaving the affections still cold and unchanged, till all christendom has been filled with reluctant hell frightened disciples; who have disgraced the christian name; multiplied skeptics; and perverted and prostrated the great reforming energies of religion. No one can become a christian till he becomes good—that is, till he loves christianity on its own account, and loathes vice and sin on account of their odiousness. Such a one loves the principles and elements of pure re-

ligion; and he cannot violate them without violence to his own heart and conscience, and best and purest and strongest feelings. Such are the christians we want; those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness." The fear of hell cannot, and never has, and never will make a true christian. But it can and has made thousands of maniacs; millions of frozen hearted pretenders; and multitudes of intolerant and persecuting bigots.

7. I feel constrained to point out another thing, always connected with true and genuine repentance. It is this. The truly penitent will always make reparation for all the wrong he has done, to the extent of his power. His refusing to do this is a continuance of his sins. Multitudes of repentant converts, who have performed all the weeping and agonizing part of the business, seem never to think of this! Ah, this is indeed a trial—this a cross which requires moral strength to raise it. This requires something more than form. All the tears and prayers and agonies that may be performed for show, will never clean the guilty soul, till he endeavors to right his wrongs. "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." Ezek. xxxiii. 15. Let the hard and sordid wretch, then, who has grown rich on the toils and tears of penury, while he arrogates to himself the pride and pomp of ill gotten wealth, and swells in all the glittering sanctity of a Pharisee; let him be plainly told, that the outward forms of penitence will never save him from the retributions of violated right. Let him gloat over his artificial consequence—but let him tremble—for justice will not always sleep. Let the polluted assassin of innocence, know, that the formulas of no church can wash away his stains; and no false religion is dark enough to hide him from the scorching retributions of eternal justice. Let all the dark votaries of wrong remember, that restitution *must* be made, to avert the aw-

ful judgments of crime. And may all *you*, who may read these pages, see to it, that you have no wrongs to redress: and live "justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God." So shall Heaven smile upon your path; and your life shall close like the calm light of a summer setting sun.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT IS MEANT IN THE BIBLE BY FORGIVENESS OF SIN, IF JUSTICE MUST INFALLIBLY GO INTO FULL EXECUTION?

SOME readers may suppose, I am getting into trouble here; but I feel not at all alarmed. If I can show that there is such a thing as forgiveness of sin, which is just and right, I shall do well enough. If not, it will devolve on the advocates of an unjust and wrong forgiveness, to show how such a one can be expected from a just and good God.

The original word, rendered *forgiveness*, is *aphesis*, which is derived from the Greek verb, *aphemi;* which is defined thus: "*to let loose, permit, grant, send away, relinquish, remit as a debt, penalty or punishment.*" That all men are to receive retribution according to their deeds, is so plainly taught in the bible, that no sophistry can fritter it away. It is also taught with equal plainness, that God does, under certain circumstances, *forgive* sin. Now partialists suppose these two things to be incompatible with each other; so that when a person is punished, he cannot be forgiven; and when he is forgiven, he cannot be punished as he deserves. Here again, they involve the Almighty in the dreadful necessity of being unjust toward those he does forgive, and unmerciful toward those he does not forgive. And of course they bring him into the *dilemma* of doing *wrong* toward every body. This grand difficulty originates also in the heathen notion of the *vindictiveness* of divine justice. Universalists generally attempt to dispose of the difficulty, by assuming that the forgiveness of the

bible, always means, a release from sin, and never a release from punishment. Now it appears evident to me, that the sacred authors used the term *forgiveness* to convey different ideas at different times. Sometimes to denote a deliverance from sin, or a release from the love of sin. Sometimes to denote a release from punishment, and such punishment too as would be inflicted, were not the sinner forgiven. "Forbearing one another, and *forgiving* one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ *forgave* you, so do you." Col. iii. 13. "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; *forgive*, and ye shall be *forgiven*." Luke vi. 37. "*Forgiving* one another, even as God for Christ's sake, hath *forgiven* you." Eph. iv. 32. "And *forgive* us our debts, as we *forgive* our debtors." Mat. vi. 12. These quotations and others of like import, indicate to my mind, that God often grants to men such forgiveness, as they ought to grant to one another. The sense does not appear to be, that we should forgive our fellow beings by releasing them from their sins, or their enmity and ill will, though this would be desirable so far as we could do it; but that we should forgive them, by releasing them from some past obligation, or resentment and punishment on account of past delinquency, and which we might feel disposed to inflict upon them. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God; for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. lv. 7. The plain sense of this is, that God *pardons* the wicked man, because he *first* turns to the Lord. Pardon here cannot mean the *turning* to the Lord; but something subsequent to the turning—something in consequence of it. If the pardon here meant the turning to God or a deliverance from sin, then the substance of the declaration would be, thus: "If the sinner will return to the Lord and reform, then God will return and *reform him.*" This will not do. But look at the fol-

lowing: "Again, when I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked *restore* the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins which he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him." Ezek. xxxiii. 15–17. Read also the whole eighteenth chapter. From these and similar passages, it appears irresistible to my mind, that some sort of deliverance from punishment, in certain circumstances, is a part of the administration of divine justice. Yet however paridoxical it may appear at first sight, *all* must and will receive *all* the punishment they deserve. Having brought the subject now as much into a knot as any one can desire, we will see if we can untie and straiten it out.

2. To comprehend this subject, it is necessary that we keep our eye steadily on the nature of punishment. All good governments have some good object to accomplish by it; and without such object no punishment can be justifiable. The Supreme Being has several objects to accomplish by punishment; but all of them are good. All of them *must* be good, or he cannot be a good being—an alternative too awful to be openly entertained by any. All his objects must accord with the moral perfection of his attributes. And probably, it will not be denied, that one main object with him in punishment, is the reformation of the offender.* When a sinner has really reformed, he has then received as much of that punishment, which was designed to reform him, as he deserved, whether that be much or little. Because he deserved as much of that kind of punishment as was necessary to that end and no more. All punishments, which are necessary to accomplish any of the good objects of punishment, are just and right—and more than this is always unjust and wrong. And as no person can

* *See Heb.* xii. 9–11.

deserve more than is just and right, so whenever a person has received all that is just and right—that is, all that is necessary to accomplish the objects of punishment, he has then received all that he deserves. And when an individual is actually reformed, he has then and not till then, received all the punishment, designed to reform him, that was necessary, and of course, all that was just, and all that he deserved. All further amendatory punishment, which would have been just, because necessary, and would have been inflicted, had he not reformed, is now *remitted* and forgiven, because it is just and right that it should be; and if inflicted under these circumstances, would have been unjust, undeserved and wrong.

3. Our laws invest the governor with authority to remit the punishment of crimes against the state; but it is expected he will try to use this power with a view to justice and right. He seeks to know whether the circumstances of the case, are such, that he justly ought to pardon the culprit. If he finds these to be such that the ends and designs of the law require the pardon of the offender, then justice requires it. The offender deserves it; and the magistrate ought to grant it; and he would be guilty of injustice and wrong should he refuse to do so. Hence it is, that we always approve of an executive pardon, whenever we think it to have been exercised justly and righteously; when otherwise, we reprobate it as unjust and wrong. When a case is presented to the executive office, therefore, for the exercise of pardoning mercy, all he wishes to know, is, whether the prisoner *justly* ought to be pardoned or not. To be sure, it would be *legal* for the Governor to withhold a pardon, where circumstances required it; but it would not be morally just. And the very object contemplated by the legislative power, is, that the Governor shall be authorized to do justice, when the inflexible statute might do injustice. It is a provision to remedy the imperfection of human law. But God's laws being a tran-

script of his own moral nature, are adapted to all cases, and require pardon to be granted whenever it is just. It will be perceived, that the object of executive forgiveness, so far from being designed to violate justice, is expressly intended to promote it. Such *forgiveness* and justice, therefore, are not incompatible with each other, any more than mercy and justice. And such punishment for sin may be remitted, as is compatible with the ends of government, universal right, and the harmonious action of all good principles.

4. Well then, our God is the moral governor of the universe. His omnicient eye sees all the circumstances connected with every case; and he grants pardon, whenever it is morally right and just that he should do it. He remits all punishments that ought to be remitted, and none that ought not to be. And should he refuse to remit such punishment as ought to be remitted, he would do injustice. For every moral action, which is not just must be unjust. And I cannot see, how any can avoid these conclusions who admit, that "the judge of all the earth will do right." It is often contended that God pardons some sinners when justice requires them to be punished. Which is the same as to pardon them unjustly—which is the same as to pardon them, when he ought not to do it. If this does not attribute injustice and moral wrong to the great disposer of events, then nothing can be certain. How hard it is for poor, blind, infatuated man, to keep in mind the idea, that God is infinitely and perfectly good; and of course, does nothing but what is infinitely and perfectly just and right! From the above considerations, it appears, that all men must receive all the punishment which they justly ought to receive; and may be pardoned too, when it is morally right and just that they should be. This forgiveness, though it is not reformation, is always connected with it and depends on it; but there is another kind of punishment which cannot be remitted even by reformation. God seems to have two ways of punishing sin. The first

is by the special direction and exertion of his own power; and the other is by the action of natural laws. The first may be withheld or inflicted as circumstances may require. The other, being the effect produced by the violation of our own nature, can never be avoided. This is nature's penalty, and can never be remitted, from the nature of things. It is the inseparable and inevitable consequence of transgressing the laws of our own constitution. It is for the general and greatest good that it should be so. It is an ever active incentive to self preservation. No Bible is necessary to teach this. Skeptics believe in this kind of punishment. But this is by no means all the punishment christianity teaches, as we intend to show in its proper place. Neither does it fully answer the purposes of discipline. The good order and government of the world, requires another kind of punishment, which God holds in his own righteous hands, as additional means of accomplishing the benevolent purposes of his government. The inebriate must suffer all the natural consequences of his drunkenness. The thief—the adulterer—the murderer, &c., must abide the necessary consequences of such conduct. But Divine justice requires more than this, because this alone would not restrain the wicked, nor always reform the guilty. Hence, the necessity, that God should hold in his hands such other means, as he knows will answer his purposes and designs, in the final destruction of all sin, and the reformation of all offenders. The sole object of much of this kind of punishment is to reform the sinner; so when he *is* reformed, he is released from all that affliction and torment, which would have been just and right had he not reformed.

5. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and JUST to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John, i. 9. This text is to our purpose. From it, it appears, that God is *just to forgive*, in case of repentance. He forgives or releases all further amendatory punishment, on account of reformation, which

otherwise would be inflicted, because justice requires that such should be forgiven. And of course, he would be unjust if he did not do it. In a word, it must be conceded, that God always does what is just, and never does any thing that is not just, else he would sometimes be unjust.

6. Although *forgiveness* sometimes means the taking away the love of sin, and the remitting of some consequences that otherwise would follow, still there is another sense in which I think the term is more generally used in the Bible. The *releasing* the sinner from obligations that are past. Man owes God obedience and reverence during his whole existence. Though he has lived years in sin, this undischarged obligation still stands against him. It has accumulated for years, and can none of it be paid. Though he may now reform and strictly obey hereafter, still that uncancelled obligation lies against him. Though he may be severely punished for it, and that punishment may have wrought out his reformation; still the duty he owed to God has not been performed; and as the time, when it should have been done, is past, that debt can never be paid. Now the cancelling of that debt would be the forgiveness of his sins. Say a servant owes me the faithful services of his whole life. He absconds and is gone a whole year. He returns; and I chastise him justly, so that he reforms, and is willing to do well the rest of his life. Still he could never pay the year's services lost to me. The punishment does not pay me; it only corrects him. Now upon seeing his good will, I freely forgive the delinquent services of the lost year, and treat him as kindly as if he had been faithful. This I think illustrates the sense of forgiveness in most passages. "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." That is, relinquish thy past claims against us, as we relinquish our claims against others when they are unable to pay. A sense of guilt is the acknowledgement of the heart, that an obligation by past delinquency, yet stands good against

the culprit. And when God relinquishes the obligation, the sense of guilt and remorse is removed. We may all need this forgiveness. And it will be perceived, that this forgiveness is perfectly compatible with punishment. The sinner may be justly punished, and justly forgiven too. "Speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem; and say unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, her iniquity is *pardoned;* for she hath received of the Lord's hand, double for all her sins."—Isa. xl. 2. This shows that when one has been justly punished and reformed, God will pardon him, and relinquish his claims upon that obedience, which he ought to have rendered in times past. Behold the name of the Lord proclaimed from Sinai. "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, *forgiving* iniquity and transgression and sin; and that *will by no means clear the guilty.*" —Exo. xxxiv. 6, 7. With all his forgiveness, he will by *no* means clear the guilty. All punishment, coming from the divine hand, must be just, hence no forgiveness can be inconsistent with such punishment, except an *unjust* forgiveness. No forgiveness can be just and not just at the same time. If it be just, then it may accord with just punishment. If it be not just, then it must be unjust, and not of God. Therefore, we are compelled to conclude the forgiveness of God is as just as his chastisements, and that they perfectly harmonise together. We must admit it, or suppose God to be unjust in forgiveness. And if he is unjust in forgiveness or any thing else, then he may be unjust even in punishments, so as to punish some more and some less than justice requires. And if he *can* be unjust in any thing, he may be in every thing; so that we could have no certainty, that he would ever punish any body. The reader has no alternative. He may have which horn of the dilemma he chooses. Either he must admit, that God is just in forgiveness as well as in punishment, or that he may have nothing to do with justice at all. I hope our partialist

friends, who have claimed so much for the *justice* of
will not come out at last, and deny all Divine ju
I hope the reader is satisfied by this time, that the
ter is not at war with Divine justice.

CHAPTER VII.

MAN'S MORAL CONSTITUTION; ORIGIN OF MORAL EVIL; HEREDITARY TOTAL DEPRAVITY; THE OBJECT AND DESIGN OF HIS EXPOSURE TO SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

The popular schools of Theology have supposed man not only a sinner by practice, but a sinner by nature. By the fall of man, they understand him to be totally depraved—that is, positively, absolutely, and infinitely wicked.

1. Is this the truth? Is man as we now find him, thus totally depraved? Is his very nature all and totally evil? If so, then we have no moral power or ability—we are not capable of thinking well or doing well—we can no more comprehend any good principle, than the blind man can comprehend light, or the deaf man sound. It would be totally unjust to require us to do any good—to address to us law, admonition, or to punish us for crime. As well might we be punished for our color, our height, our size, or our weight, as for the commission of sin, if we are totally depraved by nature; and of course can do no other than sin. What a revolting idea of the great God is involved in the preposterous supposition, that he has made man totally incapable of doing good, or suffered him to become so through the agency of another, and then burns him forever for what he could not avoid! Yet this revolting idea has been propagated and spread abroad like deep darkness over the world. And its propagators have wondered that it did not induce men to love God! I should as soon suppose rational beings could be persuaded to love a devil. No wonder that nought but the

fear of endless torments can induce any body even to *pretend* to love such a God! If God made us right and adapted our natures to our condition, then our natures are right; and to seek to change them is to rebel against God. If he made them right, any radical change in them would make them wrong. If he made them wrong, the mistake is his own, and can he expect us to correct it? Especially can he expect it when we possess no moral power, and he with all his power did the work wrong? It is rebellion, and blasphemy, to attempt or wish to change, radically, the nature of any thing God has made. God has made all things right—Nature is all right—as it should be under existing circumstances. Every natural passion and propensity is good. Man is not sinful or punishable for being what he is, or for having any natural propensity he possesses; but he is only sinful and punishable for the improper use and indulgence of these propensities—for the abuse of his nature. All his appetites are given him for wise and good purposes; but they should all be governed and regulated by rational and moral principles. His natural constitution needs no change in this life; because it is well and properly adapted to the condition of things here, and the nature of the objects which surround him. But if he has improperly indulged his appetites and abused his nature, he has acted inconsistently with his condition, and his relation to other objects; violated the laws of his moral and intellectual nature; and should repent and reform. His moral principles and resolutions should be changed, but not his nature. The Gospel of Christ requires such a moral change or moral regeneration—an enlargement, improvement, and developement of the moral, as well as the intellectual faculties; but no change or regeneration of nature, except such as may be wrought in the resurrection. And that will only be such change as may be necessary to adapt us to the condition of that higher mode of existence.

2 This moral change is exhibited in the Bible gener-

ally, under the figure of *washing* or *cleansing*.* Now observe this is inconsistent with the idea of a radical change of nature. *Washing* a thing *clean*, implies that the thing itself is valuable, but defiled with something incongenial with its nature, which may be washed off; but it implies no change in the thing itself. Wash a substance, which is naturally black and it will be black still; and it will continue so, until it is all washed away. If human nature is totally depraved, no washing can make it less so; and no contamination can make it more so. If man's nature is totally evil, all the rivers of God's grace, nor all the terrors of hell, can ever wash away that evil, till it washes him away with it. For so long as a piece of him is left, that piece would be like the rest, totally depraved. We might as well attempt to wash earth into flour, a rock into wool, a snake into a man, or death into life. We might wash lead; but how long would it take to wash lead into gold? A piece of gold, that is covered with something that obscures its brightness, and renders it unfit for use, may be washed, and then it will appear in its true nature and lustre. So gold, that is mixed with impure ingredients, may be cleansed by fire, so as to come out more pure, but its nature remains the same. God has made man just as he should be for the incipient state of his being; but he has stained himself with sin; and he may be cleansed from sin, by moral means, so as to shine out in the renovated beauty and vigor of his moral nature. He has in his moral constitution, the elements of vast improvement, of expansion, of progressive advancement to a higher and more exalted perfection and destiny. This is the change and the only change he needs; and this is the regeneration and resurrection of Christianity.

3. The Bible teaches what common sense teaches, that God has commenced our existence aright—and that all the wrong there is in the case, consists in the per-

*See 2d Cor. vii. 1, Eph. v. 26. James iv. 8, 1 John, i. 7, 9, Tit. iii. 5, 1 Cor. vi. 11, Isa i. 16, Psa. li. 7.

version of our faculties, and our own abandonment of nature and goodness. Hence Jesus says, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."—Luke xviii. 16. Again: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Mat. xviii. 3. Now this does not imply that children are totally depraved; but it implies that they are good, innocent and pure; and men, who have corrupted themselves by evil deeds, should reform and return back to the innocence of a child, in order to be proper subjects of Christ's moral kingdom. The Prophet says: "All we like lost sheep have gone astray, we have turned every man to his own way."—Isa. liii. 6. Now how could sheep go astray if they had never been at home? If they had never been in the fold? How could one lose sheep if he had never owned them? From whom have we all gone astray? Not from God, if we were never there. If we were totally depraved by nature, we could not go astray by becoming worse. For it would be impossible to become worse than totally depraved. So the only way for such persons to go astray would be to become good; and even that would be impossible. How then have we gone astray? If at first we belong to Satan, as the theory implies, we could only go astray by revolting from his service, and turning to God; and that the claims of total depravity would never allow us to do. Little children are just as little children should be; but their faculties require to be called out, expanded, guided and strengthened by the moral elements of christianity, to fit them for their progressive existence and ultimate destiny.*

*In Psa. xiv. 3, also liii. 3, and in the 3d chapter of Rom. and in many other passages, the depravity of man is represented as very great. But in all these, it is acquired depravity, not that which is natural. It was on account of their own evil doings, that their wickedness is so vividly depicted and deplored by the sacred writers.

4. Do not facts clearly show, that little children are comparatively innocent and harmless? Their infantile fretfulness results not from innate depravity, but from the uneasy sensations incident to infancy. How tender their humanity! How fine and delicate their little affecting sympathies! True, they may be easily corrupted and vitiated, by circumstances unfavorable to mild and gentle affections. But this is not natural; it is the influence of those powerful agents that surround us from the cradle to the grave. We have a moral nature, but it is a weak one, and easily subjected to corrupting circumstances. And this natural moral power differs in different individuals, as intellectual faculties differ. Some are mentally and morally idiotic. But where nothing is given nothing is required. Such seem to be human abortions—and cannot be considered moral or intellectual beings. Possibly they may cease to exist. But all, who are strictly intelligent beings, have moral faculties sufficient, if cultivated, to fulfil the ends of their existence. Man is not totally depraved when he enters upon life; but by unholy and corrupt impressions, made upon his mind, and by the influence of his natural wants, he often begins in the incipient stages of depravity. He advances with trembling step, and a reluctant, half yielding, misgiving conscience, from small to greater crimes. He sins with less and less compunction. His conscience becomes less sensitive, and his moral feelings diminished, as his depravity increases. At last, he has little or no remorse. He becomes almost totally depraved. Crimes of the deepest dye have become familiar; and to him have nearly lost their dreadful character. Now his heart is seared—his conscience depraved. Now he can smile and be a villian. He is now almost a demon in human form. He bites the hand that feeds him; and stabs the heart that desires his good. Oh how fallen—how degraded! Good men and angels pity him; but in his infatuation he pities not himself. He is reckless of principles the most sacred—of

ties most endearing. Like an enemy to heaven, to earth, and to man, his pleasure is in ruin—his bliss in plunder and desolation; and his temper and desires and hopes are the congenial elements of hell. Such, too often, man becomes; but he came not so into the world. No gem more pure—no rose more fragrant—than the sweetly innocent infant's mind. Like a flower of celestial birth, it is transplanted to this polluted soil, where the cold and pinching winds of want—the agonies of pain—the frosts of disappointment—and the breezes of moral contamination, wither its bloom, stint its growth, and cover it with infection. Such, for reasons hereafter to be explained, is the condition of hapless man. He must struggle with the tide of corrupting influence. He must war with the hostile elements of earth. He must propel his frail bark of virtue and peace, against the billows and storms that surround him; and sometimes break in dark and fearful vengeance upon his head.

II. The question has often been asked, how sin came into the world? And it has been answered by many in a way that does violence to common sense, as well as the Bible. That book gives an allegorical history of its introduction. But that has been strangely perverted in the hands of men. Out of it has been fabricated a sublime poetic Fiction, which has feasted human credulity, but only made "confusion worse confounded." As it could not be comprehended how man on earth could sin without a tempter, an angel in heaven was made to sin first, and then to be sent out to seduce man to transgress. But how a holy angel in heaven could sin without a devil to tempt him, has not been explained. Expounders have satisfied themselves with throwing the difficulty back out of their way, instead of giving light on the dark subject. They have agreed that we are all totally depraved by nature; inclined to do evil and that only. And that this state of things is the result of Adam's transgression. Well how came Adam to sin? They teach that he was not made at all depraved. That he was natural-

ly holy. That he had originally no sinful propensities —no inclination to sin whatever. But that, in this condition, he sinned without any inclination to do so; and that this sin corrupted his nature—filled his soul full of evil desires and evil propensities. And that this unfortunate sin, which happened to be committed without any evil inclination, was of such a malignant character, as not only to corrupt him and impart to him sinful desires; but also to contaminate his whole posterity. So [redacted] urally averse to all that is good, and inclined to evil. Nay—that it made them all mortal too! An immortal being became mortal! And that too by an accident! A sin committed without any bad intention! Nay, more. It infused its mortal virus into all animals; made them all mortal, and impregnated them with the seeds of enmity and malignity. And thus, "brought death into the world and all our woe." It made man hostile to man—fired the wild beasts with ferocity—and even went so far as to arm them with claws, teeth, and horns to worry and devour each other. If any can believe all this, I think their bump of Marvellousness must be big enough to make a whole head of! Well—Adam was no doubt perfectly innocent before he sinned; but his disposition to sin could not have been first produced by sin. Because no act can be sinful, unless it is the result of a pre-existing evil intention. Sin can be produced *only* by a bad disposition. The intention, which precedes and produces the act, is what gives it character. A person has a sick friend—he gives him arsenic, really believing it to be a safe and efficient remedy. But it kills him. He regrets the act and mourns the loss of his friend. But he is not guilty of murder, because he did not *intend* to kill him. Again, a person gives arsenic to a patient with full *intent* to kill him; but it so happens that is the only remedy in that case, which could have saved his life; and he recovers. Now the man is not worthy of credit for saving the patient's life, because he did not *intend* it. He *intended* to kill, and

for that very reason, he is at heart a murderer. James says, "When *lust* hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." Therefore, when there is no lust there can be no sin. Sin cannot be produced without a cause; and that cause can be no other than an evil disposition. If Adam had done an act without any intention to sin, that act could have been no sin. Therefore, he could not have sinned first, before he had any inclination to do so. And hence, he did have an inclination to sin before he did it. And therefore, his evil disposition was not produced by any previous act of sin; but was the very cause which produced the act. Theologians have put the cause for the effect—they have turned the whole matter wrong end first; and I must wheel it back again. If they wish to say, the sin consisted in the disposition which preceded the act, I have no objection. All I wish to show here, is, that no sin could have been committed without a sinful disposition, so as to have been antecedent to and the cause of the vicious propensity.

2. Now for the question. If no sin could have preceded the first evil propensity, so as to have been its cause, whence came this propensity? Where did man get it? Was Adam and all his posterity created with an evil disposition? Did God make us at first, even partially depraved and inclined to sin? No, no. No man is created with an evil disposition or nature. But the natural state of Adam and all his children, is a state of perfect innocency. But, "the creature was made *subject* to vanity." He was not made a sinner; but he was made *subject* to sin. That is, he was made a *weak* and *wanting* being. His *weakness* produces his wants. But the moral law forbids him to enjoy every thing, his weakness makes him want. His wants are morally blind, and only seek to be indulged. The moral rule points out when, and how, and to what extent, they may be indulged. But these being morally blind, often demand indulgence which is prohibited. This is temptation, lust, or want, or the Eve seducing serpent, or blind propensi-

ty reaching out after indulgence. To restrain and regulate these by the higher faculties, is virtue—to yield to them is vice or sin. Hence, it appears, that man is not compelled to sin; but only made *liable* to do so, by the weakness, imperfection, and wants of his nature, acted upon by the influence of the various objects of indulgence around him. It will be noticed, that I have assigned no part in all this business to a personal devil. My good reason is that I could find nothing for him to do, if I had brought him on to the stage. His presence appears entirely unnecessary in this plain common sense concern. And I feel assured that I shall not suffer him to figure in my work at all. I can find nothing for him to do. Should a person feel hungry, he would be inclined to eat —and if not hungry, a hundred devils could not make him desire to do so. Such are the temptations or causes of sin. When these blind propensities become too strong for the moral faculties and virtuous resolutions, man falls and sins. These moral faculties and virtuous resolutions, which are our guardian and protecting sentinels, may be increased and strengthened by cultivation, by habit, and by considerations of hope and fear. This is the great paramount object of mental and religious education. By effort, and by effort alone, all these obstacles to virtue and happiness, may be overcome.

3. From the foregoing, it appears that all sin grows out of human weakness and want, acted upon by the temptations of the world, or the objects of gratification placed before us. Yet it is true, that habitual wickedness vitiates the mind, and produces an unnatural predisposition to sin. And this, to some extent, is often propagated by hereditary descent. Now look into Eden. The forbidden fruit "*was pleasant to the eyes and good for food.*" And this appearance, acting upon appetite, overcame the lady's resolution to keep the law. She sinned, and so we all do. I consider the whole account an Allegory; but it depicts human nature generally, and the manner we all fall into sin and misery. That "old

serpent" was nothing more, in my mind, than a figure to denote the low, animal, and sensual feelings, all good in their place, but which have too often made a conquest, as in that case, over reason, conscience and virtue. Paul seems to have the idea in mind, when he says, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members."—Rom. vii. 23. Again: "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary, the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. Now I think the world can get along very well without any other devil than this. Man sometimes makes himself very bad; but the worst men have probably some good qualities. If he were totally evil, he would be totally worthless. There would be nothing in him worth saving. And it would certainly seem a poor business, to keep such a being alive always, just to see his misery. God could not love such a creature, and of course, could not desire to save him; but as a reasonable being, would annihilate him as useless. It would be folly to exhort such a being to reform, because he could not do it, nor even try to do it, any more than a snake could become a man.

4. If men were totally depraved by nature, all their sins would be only the necessary result of their constitutions. And they would not be blamable for them. They would delight in sin, and would not be happy in any thing else; but we find our moral nature is not gratified by sin. Our animal feelings and propensities may be; because, they, being animal, are morally blind. But the moral nature revolts and shrinks from sin, in proportion as the moral sense is vigorous and active. Mankind generally have more or less of this moral feeling, which makes them more or less unhappy in the practice of iniquity. They feel a kind of natural self condemnation. Crime haunts their imaginations with darkness and hor-

ror. It is the voice of their wounded and violated moral nature, like the thunder of the Deity, speaking to the trembling and horror stricken conscience. Man cannot breathe entirely free and easy while engaged in wicked pursuits. It is true, that sinful habits often nearly deface and annihilate the moral sense; so that the debased and brutalized wretch feels very little trouble at the thought of crime, aside from its probable consequences. But we are speaking of man, as God made him, as he is by nature, and not as he often becomes by habit. If men were born totally depraved, they would naturally respect the corrupt more than the virtuous. But this is not the case. The worst of men respect the good. High and exalted worth attracts their admiration and their love. It is natural for men to respect all the moral virtues, yet they would abhor them, if they were totally depraved.

5. If men were naturally totally depraved, then all men would naturally feel disposed to do all the evil they could; or at least all they dare to do. But this is not the fact. All unregenerated men do not wish to steal—to rob—to murder, whenever they can without detection; to injure every neighbor all they can—to starve and freeze and burn their own children, their own companions and friends. They do not all feel a desire to do this, even if they could without punishment. But on the contrary, many of them have tender and kind affections, exalted virtues, a strong and inflexible integrity, a pure and disinterested philanthropy, a generous and noble mind, and a deep, refined, and delicate sensibility. Are they totally depraved, so as to be inclined to all that is evil, and totally averse to all that is good? Oh, no. God has made them partially in his own image; and that moral image has never been entirely defaced. All the elements of corruption which have surrounded them, and all their wants and woes, have never been able fully to eradicate that lovely and endearing impress from their minds. This doctrine of total depravity originated in

the exclusive and aristocratic spirit of a corrupt church. Self-righteous bigots loved to make as wide a difference between themselves and the unregenerate as possible—to make the latter totally bad, so that even all their virtues might be imputed to bad motives—that no goodness could be in them, though their practice might be better than their own. And to claim for themselves qualities they did not possess, on the ground of their spiritual birth; while they attribute all their own vices to the Devil! Thus they slander the Devil—the world, and the God who made it.

6. If unregenerate men were all totally corrupt, they would wish to promote depravity by all the means in their power. If parents—they would abuse their children, and render them as miserable as possible; if husbands or wives—they would do all the evil they could and no good toward their companions; if magistrates—they would be as unjust as possible in all their decisions; if legislators—they would make laws for the promotion of evil; and suppress all the virtues by the severest penalties. In a word, all real good would be evil to them, and would be suppressed and discouraged to the extent of their power. But this we find is not generally the case. Men, in spite of the deleterious influences around them, are generally inclined to love goodness and to do good. I conclude, therefore, they are not totally depraved by nature. They are only *subject* to depravity. *Liable* to become more or less so by the temptations of this world and the influence of pernicious habits. Hence, no radical change of nature is necessary; but only to rectify acquired evil; and develope and improve the moral powers they possess; and advance onward and upward in endless progression. This is the chief work and end of their existence.

7. The consequences of believing in total depravity are prejudicial to the interests of morals and religion. Young people, believing themselves totally depraved, when they come into the world, will conclude they can-

not become worse, by any thing they can do. That they are of course already as bad as they can be; and that they cannot possibly become any better, so as to do a single acceptable act, until they are born again. Whether they practice virtue or vice; whether they pray or swear, they are considered and must consider themselves equally obnoxious to hell! In their conduct, therefore, they can have little reference to moral principles; or to rewards and punishments—no motives to a good life; but must be guided entirely by fancy, caprice, passion, or other motives equally foreign to a pure and exalted righteousness. True, they listen to the thunders of wrath and the deep tones of damnation and wo; but they will feel that their own actions have nothing to do with their destiny. If they do die in a natural state, they must be damned any how, do as they will; and whether God will choose to give them a new nature, or damn them as they are, is a matter altogether beyond their control. Therefore, they wait, thinking they can do nothing which will be credited to them, until they shall be made over again by him who made them first. And indeed, if he made them all wrong the first time, who can have any confidence that he will ever do any better?

8. Let us see what is the matter of fact in the case. If he made them all wrong at first, so that they needed a radical change of nature; and if he does any better the second time, we should expect those who are converted would possess a very different nature from others. And that there would be palpable evidence of such change of nature. But this is not so. We see no evidence of a change of nature. This seems the same even to themselves. It is yet "*subject to vanity*"—liable to sin—the same propensities—the same passions—and the same longings and thirstings. A man may be reformed; but if he loved strong drink, he loves it still; if he was dishonest, he yet often feels strongly *tempted;* if he possessed violent passions, it requires great effort to keep them under now; if he was very sensual, it re-

quires great watchfulness to sustain a pure life. He may have resolved to live a better life; he may have engaged in religious meditations, and found it delightful—all this was as practicable in a natural state as now, and would have proved equally delightful had he engaged in it. He may think his nature is changed, from having been taught so to think. But so far from it, constant exertion and perseverance are now necessary to prevent his falling into sin, just as was the case before his conversion. His nature is no more changed than his height—his size—his complexion—or his features. He might have avoided sin by constant watchfulness and strong resolution before his conversion; and they are just as necessary afterwards. In his conversion, therefore, he has not gained a change of nature; but simply a change of ideas and impressions, and consequent feelings and actions; often accompanied with a strong resolution to obey God. It is of little consequence, by what means he came to this resolution; it is good—let him strengthen it. But let him know, that his nature is unchanged, and without a firm and prayerful endeavour, "to press forward toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus," he will again be entangled in the bondage of sin. And let him not think, as many do, because his nature is changed, that sin in him is allowable, and that he will not be held strictly accountable for it. Says Christ, "He that knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." Luke xii. 47. No sophistry can reconcile the following passage, with the doctrine of total, inherent, indwelling, and universal depravity of human nature: "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by *nature* the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Which show the work of the law *written in their hearts*, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, the mean while, accusing or else excusing one another."—Romans, ii. 14, 15.

III. We have suggested that man is a complex being. He has an animal, intellectual, and moral nature. This organization is necessary to adapt him to his condition here; and his nature is right. God has made no mistake in the matter. Neither has Adam's sin affected our nature, any more than any man's sins affect that of his posterity. All our natural propensities are right in themselves; and the proper use of them is obedience, and virtue, and religion; and the *misuse* or *abuse* of them, is crime and sin.

To speak phrenologically, *Alimentiveness* is necessary to support the organic system; but this feeling, being blind, must be subjected to the intellectual and moral control, or it may run into gluttony and inebriety. *Combattiveness* is necessary to impart energy and power in combatting the many evils of life—in grappling with error and overcoming opposition, &c. And it is among the causes which now animates me, in combatting the corruptions of the church. Of course, it is a good propensity; but being itself blind, if not controlled by intellect and moral feelings, would knock down and destroy whatever came in the way, whether right or wrong. *Amativeness* promotes conjugal affection, and domestic harmony; and accomplishes one of the great ends of the animal economy. But its abuse has been a prolific source of crime and misery. *Veneration* is a religious propensity; a part of human nature, as depraved as it may be, which makes the mass of men, both learned and unlearned, adore and venerate the great first cause; but this feeling is blind like all the propensities; and hence, depends for its guidance and direction upon the moral and intellectual faculties. Therefore, some worship "the Great Spirit;" some bow to Juggernaut; some to Mahomet; some to a lustful beastly God; some to a wrathful revengeful Being; and others to a God who is just and good. This feeling rightly directed promotes pure and high enjoyment; but when wrapt in mental and moral darkness, promotes superstition, bigotry and

fanaticism. Those of strong predominating amativeness and lust, are predisposed to the worship of a lustful Deity—and those of great destructiveness and small benevolence, are strongly predisposed to worship a malicious and cruel God, and to believe in endless hell torments; they thrill with rapture in the contemplation of the shrieks and groans of the damned. Poor creatures—nothing but great effort and cultivation can ever fit them for heaven. The abuse of Veneration, together with Combattiveness and Destructiveness, has produced the most heart-rending scenes—the most dreadful injustice—and the most awful desolations, of any other cause.

2. Many suppose, if God did not make man a sinner, he subjected him to it, for the *purpose* that he might sin. That all things are for the best, and of course, that all things are right. That God knew all the sin and crime in the world, would be for the greatest good in the end, and therefore decreed that it should all be, as the best means of effecting universal happiness. And that the reason so many things *appear* wrong to us, is, that we cannot see the matter in all its relations and connections. That if we could comprehend the whole system of things, we should perceive that there is not and never can be any *real* evil in the universe. Now if this philosophy be correct, I see not that we ought to *call* any thing wrong. We should certainly call things by their right names. And if all evil is only apparent, and all things are right in reality; and our ignorance is the reason that so many things appear wrong when they are not; instead of laboring to diminish and prevent what is falsely called moral evil, we should only labor to teach men the truth, that all things are really right. And as no more *apparent* wrong could possibly get into the world, than is really for the best and highest good, there would be left nothing for us to do. All things being always adapted in the highest degree to promote the greatest possible amount of happiness in the shortest time, why should we study, or labor, or preach, or do

any thing else? Why exhort sinners to reform, if all sin is the best and only means of securing the greatest happiness of all? Would we diminish the greatest means of good, and break up the great plan of infinite benevolence? I see no reforming element in this philosophy, and therefore, reject it, as no part of that gospel designed solely to reform the world.

3. But it is said, God must have foreordained all sin, which, being good, he would not have done, had he not known it all was for the best, in connexion with its results. I answer: We do not *know* that God has foreordained all sin. The whole argument in favor of that hypothesis, is founded in human ignorance. We cannot comprehend how God can foreknow what he did not foreordain—and we cannot comprehend in what manner he can govern the world, without having predestinated all things. There are many other things we cannot comprehend of God. We cannot even comprehend *how* he foreordained all things. If there ever was a time when he had not done it, then there is left no argument that he has done it yet. And if there never was a time when he had not done it, then there never was a time when he did it—and if there never was a time when he did it, then it is not done. I do believe it is infinitely better to be content in our own sphere, than to rush into assumptions, drawn solely from our *ignorance of God*, which must inevitably involve the whole science of morals in inextricable difficulties. But God did make man *subject* to vanity, or *liable* to sin. He gave him faculties which might be abused. And he must have had some sort of prescience, the nature and effects of which we cannot comprehend, that these faculties would be abused, and that sin would abound. And he must have had an object in making him thus *liable* to sin; and that object must have been good. Now it is a question, whether the object of making us liable to sin, was that we might sin, or that some other thing might be secured, which could not result from any other condition than

this state of liability. He might have had some other more noble object to accomplish, not by sin, but by that *condition* which exposes us to sin. And it might have been impossible in the nature of things for this good to be secured from any condition not liable to be abused. We have seen that sin is an abuse of our faculties. The true object of these faculties was not their abuse, but their proper use. And probably it was not among the possibilities, that we could be adapted to our condition here, as well as we are, without possessing faculties liable to be abused. The object of food is to support life, yet it could not possess the qualities requisite for sustaining life and nourishing the body without possessing also the power to produce sickness when taken in too great quantities. For it is the same qualities which produce both effects. Who will suppose the *object* of food is to produce sickness, because it is for our good to be sick?

4. I wish to produce some choice plants in my garden. I know they will not grow unless I manure the soil and make it extremely productive; but if I do this, I know the soil will be liable to produce noxious weeds. But my *object* in enriching and fitting the soil is not to raise weeds. The weeds are not for my good and the less of them the better. But the growth of my valuable plants is produced by the same means which produces the weeds. I could not have the good without being liable to the evil; but by cultivation, I can produce more of the good and less of the evil. *Weight* is given to a man for a benevolent purpose; without it, he could not keep his place upon the earth; yet by reason of this same *weight* he is liable to fall from a precipice and break his neck. Who will say that the object of weight was that man should fall; or the object in giving him a neck, that it might be broken? It was not possible for man to have the weight necessary for his highest good, without being liable to fall; nor a neck that would answer all the purposes of such a member, without its being liable to

be broken. The object of a steam engine is not to explode and destroy hundreds of lives, yet it may be impossible for one to exist, possessing all necessary powers and qualities, without being liable, by unskilful management, to such catastrophe. The sources of perspiration were not designed to become obstructed by a cold, so as to produce a fever, but to subserve the purpose of health; yet they could not be so constructed as to answer this purpose, without the liability or exposure. So it is reasonable to conclude, that man could not possibly have been so constituted as to secure his greatest possible good, through his whole existence, present and future, without receiving such faculties and powers as to render him subject or liable to sin. And as the more we avoid those casualties to which our organic system is liable, the better for us; so the more we avoid sin to which our moral constitution is liable, the *better*. Sin, or the abuse of our nature, is not an apparent but a real evil; and the less of it the better. It is not sin that is designed for our good, but that *state of things*, which renders us exposed or liable to sin. The highest possible good of our race, therefore, requires us to secure all the good, which can result from the right use of this state of things, and to avoid all the evil to which it renders us liable, and which must result from a wrong use of it.*

*I had not examined "Comb's Constitution of Man" when the text was written, and have been told that I differed from that Philosopher in relation to the object of sin and suffering. That he held that all our sufferings are for our good. But upon referring to him, I find that we agree. Says he: "So strikingly conspicuous, indeed, is the ameliorating influence of suffering, that many persons have supposed this to be the primary object for which it is sent. A notion, which, with great deference, appears to me to be unfounded in principle, and dangerous in practice. If evils and misfortunes are mere mercies of Providence, it follows that a headache consequent upon a debauch, is not intended to prevent repetition of drunkenness, so much as

5. It may be asked, If God be benevolent, and sin and its consequences not a good but real evil, why did he not give us such a perfect existence as to be above all liability to sin? Answer: If he created at all, he must have created finite beings, otherwise, his creatures would have been equal to himself. And if they were finite, they must have been in some sense imperfect. The question then is resolved into this. Would it be better for man to begin his existence, a very weak imperfect being, and rise in endless progression, than to commence his being in its fullest possible perfection, so as to have nothing to learn and nothing to improve afterwards? It seems it would, even after deducting all real evils. Our happiness mostly results from conscious improvement. One derives happiness not from being rich, but from growing richer—not from being learned, but from acquiring knowledge. Not so much from being good, as from growing better. Not so much from being honored and renowned, as from a consciousness of an increasing and growing fame. Not so much from possession as from anticipation. And the happiness of endless improvement, advancement, progression, and anticipation,

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to prepare the debauchee for "the invisible world." Page 280. Again he says: "Some religious sects, who espouse these notions, literally act upon them, and refuse to inoculate with the cow-pox to escape contagion, or take other means of avoiding natural calamities. Regarding these as dispensations of Providence, sent to prepare them for a future world, they conceive that the more of them that befall them the better." p. 281. This expresses my own views. If we infringe the laws of our constitution, it is then better for us to submit to the penalty. But it would have been better for us not to infringe these laws, so as to make the penalty necessary. It is better for a man who has fractured a limb so that it cannot be cured, to have it taken off; but it would have been better still for him to obey the physical laws in the first place, and not make the amputation necessary.

could have been enjoyed by man, on no other plan than the one which divine wisdom has adopted. He must necessarily have commenced his existence in a state of great imperfection. Nay, the *necessary* laws of mind seem to be such, that a progressive state of being seems the only possible one for an intelligent moral being to be created in. A finite intellectual being must necessarily be always learning. And science and knowledge must necessarily be developed to a finite mind by degrees. So moral goodness itself consists in efforts made and habits of feeling contracted. And hence it would be impossible for a finite mind to be brought instantaneously into the full possession of this goodness, or any faster than it might be acquired by mental and moral efforts. As all mental and moral excellence, consists in efforts, habits, and mental repetitions, it can never be possessed by finite beings any faster than it can be acquired. The actions and habits of another can never be imputed to us, any more than one can acquire the science of arithmetic by the study and thinking of an other, without any efforts of his own. It follows, that we need never expect to be wise and good, till we become so, in the only possible way, by our own efforts. We must "work out our own salvation," or never be saved. For this very *working* is the salvation we need. We might be carried to heaven or any other place, but still we should possess no more goodness except we had first acquired it. Hence, I reject the idea of pitching out of a scene of murder into a perfect heaven, by death, as just as absurd as the sudden purification of a sin stained wretch, upon an anxious seat. God may persuade men to become good, but he cannot become good for us. This must necessarily be our own act. But God will bring us under an influence and into circumstances which will infallibly eventuate in our conversion.

6. Here we have an exposition of the subject, by Paul. "For the creature was made *subject* to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected

the same in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom. viii. 20, 21. The creature man was made *subject to vanity*—not for the sake of the vanity—not because the vanity or sin would be of any use to him, but because this state of liability and exposure was necessary to secure the means of rising in the scale of being, and emerging according to the essential laws of a finite mind, from one degree of happiness to another in endless improvement. Sin and its consequences, therefore, are *real* evils, but not the object or design of the great scheme; but only incidents to the plan. And the great good to result from the scheme, is greater, with all the evils incident to it, than could result from any other possible system. When the plan was adopted, it is reasonable to presume, that God must have known human beings, in their incipient stages of existence, would sometimes misuse their faculties, and bring misery upon themselves. But he knew also that the amount of moral means, to be employed by him, would effectually accomplish the great object of their creation. Had he not known this, he acted a very imprudent part, in creating such myriads of beings, and putting into operation, such a stupendous system of influences, and such a boundless concatenation of agencies, without comprehending the result! Such a course would impeach both his wisdom and his goodness. We perceive in view of this reasoning, that there is no necessity to do evil that good may come. All sin is *real* evil, and diminishes the amount of good that might be enjoyed. It is an entire and dead loss to the value of our existence. Fire is a great blessing to the world; but it would have been a far greater blessing, had we always so used it as never to have suffered it to burn property and life. But it could not possibly have possessed the properties necessary to the great and beneficial purposes designed, without the liability to misuse. Hence, we should endeavor to secure the great utility of its de-

sign, and avoid the evils incident to its mismanagement. But let us not conclude that fire was *designed* to burn buildings, or innocent people, or even heretics, either here or hereafter. So let us not suppose sin to be for our good, but a literal positive evil. And let us all unite with all good men, and all good and holy beings, and with God himself, in a universal war against it. The doctrine of progression is inscribed on all created nature. It is a law of mind. And how beautiful and sublime appear the works of God, unfolding, advancing, and brightening around him. New lights appearing; new truths dawning; and new and mightier Deeps opening; broader and brighter glories rising. And the boundless universe of intelligences, pressing onward and upward forever. Mighty and ineffible light. Who can fathom thy laws —thyself the mightiest deep of all!

NOTE.—My ideas on Predestination of all things, are so briefly expressed above, the reader may misunderstand me. I know I differ on this subject from learned and venerable names, on both sides of the question of universal salvation. Predestinarian Universalism is a kind of "Calvinism improved." It is one of the many daughters of that antiquated Mother. And sure, she is much fairer and better educated and more facinating than any other member of the family, still I like her not. We cannot know that God has foreordained all sin; but we do know he has forbidden it all. We cannot explain *how* infinite Prescience can exist without the foreknowledge of all things. And as foreknowledge is generally admitted, many *infer* that predestination *must* go along with it. Now we could reason safely from this attribute of Prescience, *(a priori,)* if we could fully comprehend this attribute; but we cannot. We cannot comprehend precisely the nature of this or any other divine attribute. Without this clear and perfect knowledge of Divine prescience, we cannot demonstrate, that it is necessarily connected with universal predestination.

We cannot comprehend *how* the one can exist without the other; and hence erroneously conclude, it cannot. We certainly ought not to take an attribute of God, which we know we cannot comprehend, and draw conclusions from it, at war both with the general language of the scriptures, and all motives to action. If God has secretly decreed all sin, we ought to wait till he tells us so, before we pretend to know any thing about it. The whole argument for the position, appears to me, to be drawn from our inability to comprehend God—to comprehend *how* it can be otherwise. Could we comprehend him fully, we might be astonished at our present foolish presumption. We might find his "ways above our ways," and we might find out too, *how* he knows and governs the world without predestination of all things. If any will explain to me *how* God exists every where; *how* he governs the physical universe—or in what manner he connects himself with the mental and moral creation; I will explain *how* he manages to get along consistently with our moral freedom, and without the predestination of all sin. I think, instead of plunging into deeps, that eternity may not be enough to unfold, we better confess our ignorance and acknowledge our limits. It is said, believers in the predestination of all sin, are as virtuous and moral as any. It is true, they generally act not at all on the ground that all things are *really* right. God has constituted them to live and act entirely upon a contrary plan. They generally feel, and reason, and talk, and act, just as if they believed sin a *real* evil, and not foreordained for good. The laws of their constitution compel them, in real life, to disregard their theory. This is a good argument against its truth. But I have no doubt the doctrine of predestination of all sin by God himself, has exerted some influence and somewhat retarded the progress of christian reformation, although it has stood in direct opposition to the common feelings and laws of mind. Human nature has its great springs of action, which must limit volition to a certain

sphere, and somewhat direct its progress, in spite of speculative theories. Those philosophers, who have proved also from their own ignorance, that *nothing at all exists*, avoid danger; and act, after all, much like other men.

CHAPTER VIII.

IMAGINARY AND CHRISTIAN REGENERATION CONSIDERED.

I am often asked, Do you believe in repentance? Do you believe in a change of heart? Do you believe in the new birth? I would wish the public to understand what I believe about these matters. In the preceding chapter the reader will ascertain much of the author's opinion on such subjects; but here will be presented a more particular view of the doctrine of Regeneration.

It will have been perceived, that I consider the nature of man just as it should be for a beginning of his existence. Every faculty he possesses and every propensity of his nature is just what it should be, to adapt him to the world in which he is placed, and its external arrangements. Of course, no new birth is necessary here which would change the nature of a single faculty or propensity in man. No change of *nature* in this life is to be either expected or desired. And no man's nature is changed in any case of conversion. Every christian possesses the same size, features, talents, disposition, and propensities, after conversion that he possessed before. In the constitution of his nature, he has blind instincts, good and useful in themselves, the functions of which are only to seek indulgence. He also possesses intellect and moral power, the office of which is to guide, direct, and control the instincts, that they may accomplish only the true objects designed by the Creator. Both these classes of human faculties are right in themselves, perfectly adapting us to the incipient state of our existence. But the progress of life brings us under the

influence of agencies which increase the activity and strength of the instincts; and to enable the intellectual and moral power to retain its ascendency, it becomes necessary that its activity and strength should also be increased. Regeneration, therefore, does not destroy or annihilate a single old faculty, nor create a single new one. But it consists in an increase of the activity of the moral power; and a diminishing of the power of the animal instincts. Moral means can alone accomplish this end. And the Christian religion is only a combination of moral means, adapted exactly and admirably to the nature of man; designed to strengthen and invigorate his moral power, and enable him to war successfully against the improper workings of instinct or lust. When christian influence arouses the moral power, which we already possess, into action, and imparts to it new vitality, by reason of which, new and holy resolutions are formed, a change is experienced. This is the change which christianity contemplates, and this is the *beginning* of regeneration. The whole work of religion upon the soul, expressed by "ceasing to do evil and learning to do well," by being washed—justified—cleansed—adopted—sanctified—and saved—are all comprehended in the progressive and triumphant efforts of the moral power over the animal instincts; while the christian "fights the good fight—runs with patience the race set before him—and grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. Among professed christians, we often see evidence that a new and better object has awakened their attention and engaged their affections; that they are more anxious to conform to the divine will, and to lead good lives; but we never see the least evidence that their nature is changed at all. So we often see great changes in the objects and pursuits of men in relation to other matters. Tiplers often become zealous advocates of Temperance, idlers often become industrious, the licentious often become chaste, and all sorts of changes in

the affections and pursuits of men are common. But none suppose such changes to imply any radical change of nature; but only that some new agency has acted upon their feelings and views to give them another direction. The new birth of the christian differs not from other changes in its nature. It is simply a change or conversion from moral error, ignorance, and the love of sin, to christian knowledge, and the love and pursuit of christian objects.

3. Many believe regeneration to be a radical change of nature. And he who fortunately experiences it in this life, will go to heaven, whatever his moral character may have been; and he who does not will be lost whatever his life may have been. Hence the whole influence of religion is withdrawn from the great field of morals, where it truly belongs; and is all concentrated upon a single point, which has no practical bearings upon human life. The great religious inquiry is not, how shall we live? how shall we act? But—have we got religion? have we been born again? A person dies. Every body asks not, how did he live? was he honest? was he merciful? was he philanthropic? But—was he born again—did he get religion before he died? Just as if there is no connexion between the *life* of this world, and the happiness or the misery of the next; but that endless bliss or endless pain would depend entirely upon a miraculous change in this life.

4. If the common notion of heaven resting entirely upon such a radical change be correct, we might suppose God would have communicated some knowledge of this to the millions of heathen who have lived and died, that they might have had some opportunity to escape hell. Yet no such communication has ever been made to them. We might have expected the writers of the Old Testament would have been instructed in it, that the millions before Christ might have been born again; yet this is not the case. Nothing of such a change is mentioned by any of them. They spoke often,

in both simple and figurative language, of forsaking sin—turning to God—reforming in life, &c.; but nothing of this change of nature. If they knew any thing about it, why did they not tell their readers that they themselves were born again; and describe the process so circumstantially that every body could understand it? We have no evidence that one of them was ever born again, in the modern sense of the phrase. And when we come to the New Testament, we read of turning to God, reformation of life, &c., but nothing which could be construed into the modern idea of a new birth till we get to John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke seem to have known nothing of it. Jesus said nothing of it in his sermon on the mount. Yet divines now make it the "one thing needful," the sum and substance of all religion. True, all the sacred writers speak often of reformation—of forsaking sin; but down to John, not one of them says a word, that any would ever have understood to imply such a change as is now conceived to be the only door of escape from eternal burnings! Is not this passing strange?

5. From these considerations, it appears, that although the inspired writers generally exhorted and admonished wicked men to repent—to reform—to be converted; and were zealous in their labors for this worthy object; they did not speak of this reformation as a change of nature literally. Their language on the subject, generally, when compared and taken together, implies a moral change, an improved disposition, and a reformation in practice. Sometimes indeed expressions occur, which taken alone, might seem to favor the idea of a radical change. But when we consider how much of bible language is figurative, and all composition even in this literary age, we shall not wonder that a great moral, religious, or doctrinal change, should be sometimes represented by figures, which might seem to imply a total regeneration—a radical and complete change of nature. And to know that such was not indeed the sense of the

sacred writers, we must examine their expressions generally on the subject. Then it will be easy to distinguish the figurative from the literal passages. The change which the gospel is designed to effect in the dispositions of mankind is sometimes called a "regeneration," a "new birth," a "resurrection of the dead," and the like; but there can be no doubt with the candid and enlightened reader, that all such phrases, applied to the christian change, are figurative. We often call habits a second nature; and when they are deep rooted and confirmed, they give such a permanency of character to man, that it is referred to often as his nature itself. In scripture, the habitual character of persons is no doubt often referred to figuratively as their nature.

II. With these remarks, we introduce the main passages, from which the common idea of regeneration is taken. "Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee: except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."—John iii. 3. On this, I remark,

1. All will allow that this being born again is a figurative phraseology, and not to be understood literally; and that Jesus explained it to Nicodemus as figurative at the time. Hence, we are left to inquire, what is its true meaning as a figurative representation? Shall we refer to Christ's explanation at the time? Very well. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit." Well, this exposition itself seems clothed in that figurative style, which characterizes all the ancient writings. But is there any thing here about a change of nature? Not a word. It seems to imply a reformation in morals—a change of disposition and pursuits, brought about by the *influence* of those moral means unfolded in the gospel;

not changing our nature, but giving it another and better direction.

2. The other evangelists use no language which any would understand to mean a change of nature, except what is implied in the resurrection of the dead. They say nothing of this conversation with Nicodemus. Of course they supposed Christ's other instructions on repentance and reformation, contained the substance of his doctrines on that subject. They supposed they had given to the world the substance of all our Saviour's doctrine that was necessary to build up the church and promote the salvation of men. Yet no one could gather any thing from their records, that Jesus expected men to meet with any supernatural change in this life; nor any thing more than to believe in him, and turn from sin to his heavenly precepts.

3. This conversation with Nicodemus was incidental. It was not one of those important and solemn occasions, where the Son of God addressed the multitudes on the most essential principles of his religion. But it was an interview by night between him and a Pharisee, wholly incidental on his part; and the peculiar figure and form of expression used at that time, to impress upon the mind of the Pharisee the necessity of reformation, undoubtedly, grew out of the peculiar character and condition of the person he addressed, compared with the character of that religion he was recommending. Nicodemus was devoted to an outward, ostentatious, formal religion, much like modern christianity. No doubt, all his strong prejudices—all his interests, all his kinsmen, and domestic and social relations, and all the feelings of his heart were devoted to the popular religion of the Scribes and Pharisees. But Jesus was propagating an inward, unostentatious religion of the heart. To embrace this religion, such a man as Nicodemus must sacrifice his worldly interests and prospects, his friends and all earthly endearments, for the despised and persecuted character of a friendless, homeless disciple of Jesus. He

must exchange wealth, and pomp and ease, and all the fascinations of sumptuous life, and all the powerful charms of earthly glory, for a hazardous and bloody pilgrimage; to wander as a lonely exile upon earth, obnoxious to public scorn, and an unrelenting legalized persecution. To do this would require a change indeed. And so great a change—such a mighty quickening and vivifying of the moral power, Jesus compared to a new birth, or becoming a new man. This change is, doubtless, an incipient degree of that improvement, by which we are prepared to progress into an immortal and incorruptible constitution. But the Divine Teacher here had only reference to that reformation and moral activity which was a necessary preparation for the joys of his moral kingdom, as set up and established in this world. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" that is, "Except such a man as you, Nicodemus, shall turn directly about, renounce most all that is dear to you, and relinquish your prejudices, you cannot see and appreciate the principles of the moral and heavenly kingdom I am setting up in the earth; neither can you enjoy that eternal life (spiritual life) which you enquire after, and which I promise to my disciples: to be in them as 'wells of living water,' to comfort and cheer their minds through the darkness of this vale of tears." It is said that when any person renounced one religion and embraced another, among the Jews, it was common with them to say, "He is born again," or "He has become a new creature." They were so tenacious of their religion, that a renunciation was very rare, and it subjected one to a change in almost all his temporal concerns and social relations. This change of religion and condition being so rare and so complete, was figuratively called a "new birth" or "regeneration."

4. We are persuaded that the Gospel requires no other change in us here, than simply to give our hearts, such as they are, to God; so that our affections and desires shall be devoted to him and his moral kingdom.

Fear may restrain men from *doing* wrong; but *moral* principles presented to the mind in their own inherent energy, can alone lead to a genuine conversion. That the spirit of God moves upon the heart, through the medium of truth, to urge us forward in reformation, there can be no doubt; and that this spirit aids with its sanctifying influence, every good and laudable effort of the human mind is equally evident. But for any to pursue iniquity, under the idea that no change can avail but a regeneration, which God alone can produce, is like trusting in God to clear our farms, build our houses, sow our seed, educate our children, &c. We can no more expect the Almighty will make us virtuous in the noon of life, and happy in its decline, without our exertions, than that he will feed and clothe, and make us rich without them. And no person that really wishes to be a christian can possibly fail to be one. We may be disappointed in the pursuit of wealth, honor, and earthly pleasure; but never in the pursuit of the heavenly treasure—the "pearl of great price."

5. I think enough has been said on the subject of the conversation with Nicodemus. And now we will advert to some other accounts of conversion. There is nothing in the conversion on the day of Pentecost that implies a change of nature, but only belief in the Messiah and obedience to him. See Acts ii. 21, also 38 and 41 verses. The same may be said of the Ethiopian Eunoch. But the conversion of Paul is said to have been miraculous; and that his nature was really changed. True, miraculous means were employed in his conversion, but we have no evidence that these means changed his nature, but much evidence that such was not the fact. His feelings were only turned from one object to an other. In him we find the same original elements of thought and feeling after his conversion as before. Previous to his change, his views made him a zealous opposer of Christ; after this, his views were such as to make him a zealous advocate of what he once destroyed. He

simply experienced a change of views, which opened before him other objects, and aroused his moral nature into a very high degree of activity. This is the natural effect of clear perceptions of christian truth, operating upon an active and strong temperament. Under the mighty influence of christian truth, his moral power acquired a great ascendency over his animal propensities. Yet these propensities continued to exist—not one of them was destroyed—his nature was unchanged. His propensities yet solicited indulgence; and in the predominating activity of the moral sense, he exclaims: "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"—Rom. vii. 24. He also said: "But I see another law in my members (the carnal mind or the animal propensities) waring against the law of my mind, (the moral sense) and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."—Rom. vii. 23. By the *spirit* and the *flesh*, the apostle represents the moral sense, and the animal propensities, as standing in opposition to each other. They are attributes of our common nature, whether converted or not. But those who are imbued much with christian influence, keep the propensities under, and act more generally in accordance with the moral sense. "For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit."—Rom. viii. 5. There is as much sense in calling the change experienced by a youth, who becomes a good scholar, a change of nature, as that of the individual, who becomes a christian. A conversion from Judaism or Paganism to a belief in christianity, was all that was generally meant by being born again; but the apostles sometimes had a farther reference to the moral qualities of a christian in the use of the phrase. Though conversion, in its most common sense, only implied faith in Christ, yet it was used sometimes to denote that pure moral excellence, which such faith naturally inspires.

6. "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that ev-

ery one that doeth righteousness *is born of him.*"—1 John, ii. 29. To be *born* of God here means nothing more than a moral relation. To be literally born of a natural parent, implies a natural relation and resemblance. So the relation of the christian to God, is moral relation or *moral resemblance.* Therefore, "every one that doeth righteousness is born of him," or sustains a moral resemblance of him, as we naturally resemble our earthly parents. And this resemblance is so small sometimes, in the natural relation, that we can scarcely perceive it; at other times it is more perfect; so our moral relation or resemblance to God is sometimes very small, at others more perfect. But every one that doeth righteousness with good motives, is born of him, that is, morally resembles him so far as he doeth righteousness.

"For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world."—v. 4. So far as any one is morally born of God, or morally resembles him, he is above the dominion of worldly passions.

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin."—iii. 9. This does not mean, as some contend, that whatever the saints may do, whether robbery, theft, or murder, is no sin in them, because they are excused and licensed; but only so far as we are born of God and resemble him, we are holy, and do not commit sin; but as this resemblance is more or less imperfect, we are not freed from sin any farther than we are born of him and the relation is perfected.

"Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."—iv. 7. *Every one* that loveth *is born* of God. Every one that exercises that divine benevolence and justice which characterize God, is like God. He so far resembles him, and is so far born of him. And his new birth and relation to God is in exact proportion to this moral resemblance.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God."—v. 1. Such are born of him only so far as

opinion is concerned. "No man hath seen God at any time: if we love one another, God dwelleth in us."—iv. 12. Benevolence is the great Christian test. Every man is a practical christian just so far as this sways his soul. This is the golden chain of affinity that binds all good beings to the great fountain of all good. So far as our hearts are warm with divine love, just so far we are like God; so far his kind and pure spirit is in us. "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."—iii. 14 This is the rule. How different from the sectarian rules of men! "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected."—ii. 5. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."—John xiii. 35. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE."—iv. 8. Here we have these truths plainly advanced. 1. God's moral nature is love. 2. All men are like him, or morally born of him, by meral relation and resemblance, so far as they have the spirit of kindness and of charity, or moral justice, and no farther. 3. That his "whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Or devotion to him and his sentient creation, comprehends all human duty; and is the root from which grow all christian virtues. LOVE then is the nature of God—it is the law of God—it is the new birth—it is conversion, regeneration, and adoption—it is the exaltation of man, and the beginning of heaven.

7. It will have been noticed, that the new birth, in scripture, refers sometimes simply to a change of opinion, but more generally to the acquisition of the moral spirit of the Gospel. Faith in Christ, and a disposition that resembles his, are therefore necessary to the perfect christian. A person may have the faith to some extent without the disposition; and doubtless he may have something of the disposition without the faith. "Faith without works is dead;" but works without faith are still excellent. So that an unbeliever with a good spirit, has

a far clearer title to the name of christian, than he who has faith only. For he that has only a *dead* faith has none of vital christianity about him. What avails faith to one whose heart is bad? Take a cold, selfish, hardened, cruel wretch, and give him the opinion that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God; and so long as his heart remains untouched, he will still be a sordid wretch. The main excellency or value of faith is its tendency to awaken in the heart the feelings of human kindness, and fraternize our race. Thousands and millions are born to faith; but how little are people born of divine love! How rare are the gems of heaven born humanity! The spirit of love is the temper of heaven. It warms the frozen heart, and pours a heavenly calm—a soft and tender, and happy influence over the mind. It breaths the balm of heaven over the ties of kindred and friends. It warms and fertilizes the social atmosphere, and consoles and blesses the children of sorrow. As the sunbeams irradiate and vivify the natural world, so this great spirit of love is the life and glory of the moral and social world. What admiration is enkindled at the thought, that this is also the sum, and substance, and essence of Christianity: that full, perfect, and boundless love pervades the mansions of the good, the holy, and the beatified. This spirit rises up in its divine glory, over the dark storms of angry passion, malice, and wrath; and in language such as angels use, invites mankind to peace and heaven.

III. The above is conceived to be a correct exposition of a Bible conversion. Yet it is true that we often hear persons claim to have been born again, who are dishonest in deal, malicious in temper, and dead to the feelings of humanity. They say they *know* they have been born again—they *felt* it, and cannot be mistaken. They *have* experienced something—they have *felt* wonderfully —they have experienced a succession of strong and powerful emotions—an excitement of mind. And they have been taught to call it regeneration!

I will describe the process—the *modus operandi* prac-

ticed by many to convert men. The candidate for the new birth has been taught, that he was totally depraved and bound for the flames of hell. That he must *feel* something extraordinary, some uncommon and miraculous excitement. He waits with anxious expectation for these peculiar and extraordinary emotions. He has a vague and indistinct conception of what these strange feelings and transition of mind must be, and what he must do to bring them on. At last, some sudden death, or some extraordinary appeal, or some uncommon and simultaneous attention to religion among the people, arouses his mind to intense and all absorbing seriousness on what, he conceives the everlasting interest of his soul. He remembers what he has heard and read of the *feelings* of others. His imagination, wrought up by agonizing concern, and deep and intense anxiety, at last, takes the full control of his mind. At one moment, it plunges him down to the confines of hell, uncaps the dread abyss, and portrays the groups of the damned, and arouses the convolving fires. He sees the ghostly forms, and the riving bolts of infernal lightening. He hears the deep wail—the prolonged groan—the sneers and shouts of devils, with all the horrible roar of a burning sea, aroused by the breath of almighty wrath! His nerves tremble! He shrieks out for help—for mercy!

Imagination again transports him from these tartarian scenes to Calvary. He there sees the precious streams of redeeming blood, flowing to "quench Jehovah's burning wrath." He sees Jesus extending the arm of pity with an inviting accent. He hears angels shout that another soul is born again. His heart begins to swell forth with gratitude and joy! Imagination then takes a still more extended range! He sees the glories of the upper world—he listens to celestial music; nature smiles and creation rejoices. Thus he is born again! All these feelings are a reality. He *knows* he has felt them; and therefore, he *knows* he is a christian, though he may not practice a single christian

virtue, and though *morally* he may be almost as bad as the devil that frightened him so. But in truth, these exercises have no christianity in them. They are commenced by various circumstances operating upon the mind, predisposed by education to be thus affected; and they are finally carried forward and completed by the aid of a stimulated and highly excited imagination.

2. To combine, increase, and bring into active and efficient operation, these predisposing and exciting causes, is the object of all those great and powerful exertions, which appeal to the passions and imagination, instead of the reason and judgment of men. Such is the object of camp meetings, where many predisposing and exciting causes may be found. The gathering of a vast multitude, the gloomy scenes of night, the impassioned eloquence of the leaders, the varying and almost unearthly voices of the devotees, have a mighty influence upon the imaginations of the weak and the passionate. The late device of protracted meetings has also the same object. The movers in these scenes seem to know that no supernatural change by God is to be expected; and hence by their own efforts they design to produce an effect which credulity will attribute to God. Were it the miraculous work of God, in making over the nature of men, we might expect him to perform it in India, in China, in Thibet, in Hindostan, in Tartary, in Siberia, in Turkey, and Arabia, and especially in Palmyra and the Holy Land. We think he would not wait for missionaries to introduce him to the acquaintance of those people. *Means* are proper in the spread of Gospel influence to affect man's moral nature as it is, and arouse it to action; but no human means are adequate to work a radical change in the constitution of nature. That such efforts should produce such effects as they do is not extraordinary. Let a modern revivalist appear in the midst of an excited multitude. All are trained and prepared for something awfully mysterious and moving. The master spirit is deep skilled in the secret springs of nature.

He knows how to touch the respective chords of fear, sympathy and love, and speaks with design to produce the effect. He appeals first to their fears. He holds up to their imaginations the omnipotent Divinity clothed in terrific grandeur. He brings forth the spectres of the damned, and makes them "unfold the secrets of their prison house." He shows them the recording angel sealing each name for heaven or hell. Again he assumes a loftier flight, heaven and earth are on fire—worlds on worlds convolve—the Judge descends with looks of terrific wrath—millions of spirits attend his court, each like a comet glowing with ready vengeance. A trump bursts over the shrinking world that starts the dead to life. Some clad in glory ascend to heaven; and the rest are driven by fierce flames and rolling thunder to the dark world of wo! The terror stricken hearers are made to look down and see the boundless deep laid open, and to hear the commingled groans and curses of the reprobate throng. Many are shaken with intense and overwhelming anxiety; sighs and prayers are heard, and tears gush forth. The chords of sympathy and hope and love are now gently touched; reacting nature aids in producing a transition to happy feeling. They feel assured they are "born again." Joy and rapture start up in the mind—assisting agents pour in a strain of soft and enchanting music. To them the change is sudden, and astonishing. All creation seems to partake of the joy and gladness of their hearts. And thus they are actually "born again," that is, they have *felt* exactly as they think they have. But I believe this is all the effect of human means adapted to pre-existing ideas and human passions; and neither a change of nature, nor a christian conversion. And for want of these peculiar feelings, many become insane through fear of hell; and others, having experienced them, lean upon them as a sure title to heaven, independent of practical virtue. I know that many christians of different denominations agree with me in this matter. And when the christian community

shall generally understand, that christian regeneration simply imports the cultivation and improvement of the moral nature which we all possess, and the growth in grace and practical virtue, I think much will be gained to good morals and the cause of humanity.

Let all be born of Love divine,
And Jesus reign in every mind;
So Peace on earth, to men Good Will,
And God's great law of Love fulfil.

CHAPTER IX.

DOES SIN ALWAYS PUNISH ITSELF BY ITS OWN ACTION ON THE SINNER, TO THE FULL EXTENT OF JUSTICE?

I now wish to examine the question in all christian candor, whether or not, *sin does invariably and justly punish itself, by its own natural and necessary action on the sinner, without the intervention of other agencies?* And on this subject, I may be compelled to differ with some writers of deserved reputation and worth. But it is a subject of great felicitation, that believers in ultimate universal purity and happiness, do not acknowledge any human authority as infallible; but allow the right of all to investigate and judge for themselves.

1. We shall define punishment to be *misery inflicted upon the offender, on account of his sins, for some benevolent purpose.*

It must be admitted by all, that sin is either the direct or indirect cause of all punishment. And it must also be admitted that punishment is always *misery* and never *happiness.* Now it does not appear to me, that sin of itself always renders the sinner unhappy in proportion to its magnitude. What is happiness? It is a feeling of pleasure—a combination of agreeable sensations—or in other words, happiness is *gratification.* It is the feeling experienced by the gratification of our strongest and predominating propensities and sentiments, whatever they may be. If this be not happiness, what is it? I should be totally unable to tell. Besides, it is evident, this is what the world generally mean by the word; and we wish to use it in its common acceptation and sense.

If all our feelings, or in other words, all our propensities, sentiments and desires, were to act in harmony, and be all fully gratified at once, we should then be perfectly satisfied, and happy to the full extent of our powers. But these always conflict more or less with each other, and pull in opposite directions, which proportionately divides and diminishes our gratification or happiness. But when the strongest and most predominant can be gratified, the most agreeable feelings are the natural result, whether those predominant propensities are good or bad. And that felicity will always be alloyed or diminished in proportion to the counteraction of the less potent but opposite promptings of the mind. Therefore, all other sources of rewards and punishments aside, a person's happiness depends naturally, not so much upon the moral character of his actions, as the accordance of those actions with his prevailing inclinations; and the union and harmony of those inclinations with each other. A person of strong benevolence will derive happiness from relieving distress; but if his avarice be nearly as strong, it will much diminish the pleasure of his benevolent acts. One feeling would then be gratified, and another almost as much ungratified, so as to leave but a small balance of enjoyment. Blind avarice might be gratified in the thief; while at the same time, his moral sense might be so violated as to more than counterbalance the other gratification, and on the whole, give him more pain than pleasure. But if his avarice were strong, and moral sense small, and no fear of consequences to trouble him, then stealing would be a pleasurable exercise. The same act may make one person happy, and another miserable, because it accords with and grows out of the inclinations of one person; and it grows out of some cause in opposition to the inclinations of another person, and is averse to them. *This* lady is happy in being married to that gentleman—but *that* lady would be miserable indeed, if compelled to do so. One person is happy in a pure and virtuous society; another would find no com-

fort there. One is happy in reflecting upon the boundless expatiations of Supreme *Benevolence;* another, upon the wailings and screechings and howlings of the damned. Hence, some think they could never be happy in heaven, nor ever desire to go there, unless they can have the consolation of seeing some endure endless torments. And if there be a personal Devil, (which I doubt) this must be his great predominating desire; and the miserable wretch can never be happy any more than others unchanged of like disposition, unless some are burned forever for his gratification. One person finds happiness in the calm sunshine of rational piety, another in the whirlwind and fury of fanaticism. One in the exercise and contemplation of virtue and religion; and another in the mirthful frolic, or in the haunts of vice. The good man, whose moral feelings and propensities make him "hunger and thirst after righteousness," will be happy in the indulgence of those righteous feelings; and he would be unhappy if not allowed to indulge them. But the bad man, whose predominating inclinations are evil, can be happy only in their gratification; and would be unhappy and impatient if restrained. And the fulness of this happiness will only be limited and diminished by whatever amount of moral and virtuous energy he has to conflict with his depravity. For this reason, good men are apt to fall into the error, that good actions always make the actor happy, and that vicious conduct always punishes itself. And on the other hand, bad men are apt to suppose, that vice always produces bliss, and virtue misery. Both classes judge universal human nature by themselves; and both doubtless err. The well disposed have adopted this maxim, that "virtue and happiness, as well as vice and misery, are inseparably connected." That they are related as cause and effect, in a certain way, will be shown in the sequel; but they are not so directly and immediately related, as that the one of itself alone, must necessarily produce the other. Men have sinful *lusts* to gratify, and so far as sin gratifies those lusts, it

yields pleasure, though no doubt, the moral sense is so strong, as to counterbalance the pleasure of sinful indulgence by self condemnation.

2. It is true, there is a remedial principle in all law, which, in its own way, punishes the transgressor. The violation of a physical or organic law, works out its own penalties. But this is not, strictly speaking, a punishment. John maliciously breaks William's leg. William here suffers the violation of a physical law, not as a punishment, but as an evil, resulting from another's crime, and the organized state of mortal existence. Punishment and reward, strictly speaking, can refer only to moral actions. In the case above, John violated a moral law, or which is the same thing, a moral *rule* of action; which differs essentially from organic laws, which are not *rules* of action, but constitutional principles of organic existence. If John has a very vindictive disposition, and little or no moral sense, he would feel pleased, and triumph in his cruelty. But if otherwise constituted, he would be troubled with penitence and remorse. So that the natural operation of his crime would be to punish him *less* in proportion as his crime was *greater*. If sin were simply a violence of our own moral sense, *then* it would always inflict its own punishment, like physical and organic laws. And then every man might do whatever his moral sense would allow with impunity. This would make every man's moral sense the law or rule of action. This is the great mistake. Such is not the fact; and hence the whole argument drawn from that assumption falls to the ground. The moral law is not simply every man's moral sense; but it is a rule of action which results mainly from our relation to society and to God. Therefore, the government of God, and the well being of society, are violated by sin. And upon this fact are founded other penalties, not growing out of man's own moral sense, but from his relation to others. This law of relation to others, being violated by sin, must also inflict its punishment upon the

offender for its own protection. It is true, that whatever moral sense *is* violated in the commission of wrong, produces a corresponding pain in the mind of the offender. But this moral sense, being not the only law violated in crime, it cannot, in the very nature of things, and *does not* inflict all the necessary punishment. There is often little or no moral sense violated in vicious acts, even where the social law is awfully outraged. Men possessing much of this sense are not apt to commit crime. The most vicious and criminal of men, are those of little or no conscientiousness. And these perpetrate great crimes with very little infraction of moral feeling. Such are punished very little this way; yet they need penal restraints more than others; because there is very little else to restrain them. Therefore, from the very necessity of the case, (which is the only ground of all just punishment) they are held accountable beyond the narrow limits of their own moral sensitiveness. And because, however obtuse their moral sense may be, they well know their actions to be wrong. A person may have become so devoid of all feelings of justice and humanity, as to perpetrate a murder, with very little or no shock to his conscience; yet his intellect informs him, that the deed is deeply wrong; and he cannot be left to judge and punish himself. His sin, in such case, punishes him less, than others would suffer for the most trifling offence. Indeed the more depraved and corrupt a person might be, upon this hypothesis, the less he would deserve to be punished, and the less he would actually receive!

3. This theory assumes that a man's criminality is proportioned to the degree of moral sense violated; but the want of moral sense, so far from diminishing the turpitude of crime, is one of those very things which gives an act its criminal character. Criminality is proportioned to the depravity of the intention, and the degree of knowledge, against which the wrong is committed. I explain it thus: John, possessing 3 degrees of

knowledge, commits an act with 4 degrees of depraved or bad intention. Multiply the knowledge by the intent; 3 times 4 is 12. Here 12 may express the degrees of guilt or blame. William, against 3 degrees of knowledge, commits the same act with 8 degrees of bad intention. His guilt would be expressed by 24, just double that of the other. Henry, with 2 degrees of knowledge, commits the same act, with 3 degrees of bad intent. His guilt would be relatively expressed by 6. This scale, could every man's knowledge and motives be truly ascertained, would determine the relative guilt and blame of all criminal acts. Hence the propriety of the Saviour's remark: "He that *knoweth* his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes," &c.

4. Suppose I say to a thief: "Sir, you have been stealing for years without detection." "Yes, (says he,) and have made a fine business of it too. Could I be sure never to get punished for it"—"Hold! (I exclaim,) you *have* been punished. Do you not know that sin always punishes itself; and of course that all other punishments are unnecessary and unjust? Your thefts always inflicted a punishment immediate and adequate—they made you feel self-condemned; or rather your moral sense made you feel so; and this is a perfect retribution, as much as you deserved." "Ah, (he replies,) I am glad to hear it. I did not know that before. All the anxiety I ever felt on the subject was the fear of detection; and I hope not to be troubled any more with that. If my sins punished themselves as you say, they must have been very sly and gentle about it; for really, I never suspected any such thing. I never *felt* it at all. But if this is all the punishment I have to apprehend, I have the matter all to myself you know. And I will still go on with my profitable business, which punishes me in theory but not at all practically—all so playfully, that I never feel it nor know any thing of it. But, dear sir, do just let our law makers understand how infallibly sin always punishes itself, and how kindly too; so that those horrible stat-

utes, which make such poor creatures *feel* punishment may be repealed. And the Bible too, denounces more dreadful punishment upon sin, than I ever felt, and speaks as if there was a retribution from God, which all men did not know by experience, but I suppose you can explain all that, and show that it means nothing more than what we all feel and know without a Bible as well as with it. But you cannot explain the statutes. Do see to it, that they are repealed at once."

5. A child puts his hand in the fire, and feels the smart immediately; because this pain is the immediate and infallible consequence; and this experience effectually restrains him from doing it again. But the sinner generally realizes no such immediate effects of sin, but often feels really gratified, so as to desire to repeat it. When the good are drawn into wrong by some sudden or overwhelming temptation, they feel the stings of guilt and shame to follow, which tends to restrain them afterwards. But the more depraved feel proportionably less; and, as far as we can learn, many feel nothing disagreeable to result from vicious indulgences; but on the contrary, pleasurable sensations. It is beyond all dispute, that mankind have never generally known nor believed, that their sins inevitably punish themselves, by their own immediate action upon them. And therefore, either it was not so, or else the punishment was such as could not be felt. But punishment, which cannot be and is not felt, is no punishment at all. Therefore, sin has not punished all men of all ages, by its own necessary action, so as to answer the designs of punishment. All men of all ages agree that burning the flesh produces pain; and so they would agree that sin always torments the sinner if it were a fact. And then too they would equally fear it and endeavor to avoid it, which is not the case. Does the debauchee realize, that his vices of themselves give him pain instead of pleasure? If so, having experienced the pain he would wish to avoid it. But so far *from this,* he desires to experience it again, and again,

till his disposition is changed, and some other feeling predominates. Some think the world should be told that virtue always makes happy, and that vice always torments, that they may be induced to practice the one and avoid the other. If it be true, it would be unnecessary to tell them of it; for they would know it by their own experience; and it is useless to tell them what is untrue, and what their experience contradicts. They will believe their own senses rather than the maxims of theoretical moralists. What they experience as the direct effect of their actions, they know whether they are told or not. What should we think to see some making great efforts to convince people that fire smarts—or to convince hungry people that food tastes bad? Tell the hardened pirate, that his bloody deeds have always goaded his conscience; and punished him to the full extent of justice; and he would think to himself: "I know all about this—I know what I have felt—and if this be all, I cannot choose a more accommodating Judge, nor a less dreadful punishment." Make him believe this, and it would add nothing to the horrors, which he had always known to be connected with his course, but would diminish all his dread of final retribution. And that *dread* is about all the trouble such fellows derive from reflection. What do the proud oppsessors of the weak, who feast on human wo, and gloat over the fallen and stricken children of misfortune, care for conscience, if relieved from the dread of further retribution? This doctrine puts the Judge and Executioner both into the hands of the interested criminal; and looks for impartial justice from that scathed and vitiated conscience, which never bows to its high authority. Every sinner knows for himself how his sins affect him, and when he repeats them continually, it is manifest that he feels not very severely punished. He needs to learn, what is indeed most true, that other consequences are to be feared for sin, besides its direct effect upon the mind—consequences awarded by a more perfect and unerring tribunal.

6. If sin punishes itself, by its own necessary action on the sinner, then all penal laws should be at once abolished. For if crime always punishes the criminal according to his demerits, to the full extent of justice, it would be both unjust and cruel for human laws ever to punish at all. For why should one be punished over again by human laws, after he had been justly punished by his crimes themselves? Surely, upon this ground, all laws should be abolished; because vice and crime here ascend the throne, take the place of law, and at once supply the place of sheriffs, judges, juries, lawyers, and penitentiaries. Upon this plan we might save taxes at least. Suppose reader, you believe what I here combat. You return home in the night, and discover your house in flames—you meet the villain at your gate. He says, "I have murdered your wife and children, got your money, and burned your house. I shall now be rich and you will be poor. I have desolated your home, blighted your hopes, and crushed you to the earth. I had a little feeling for you when I did it; but I felt more for your money, and this I have. You know that feeling was a full retribution—I deserve no more." Would you still think your theory right? Human feelings might carry justice over into revenge—but all must be supervised by him who never errs. Must we suppose man to be accountable and blamable only according to the degree of moral sensitiveness which he violates? Ah, forsooth, then a man's own depravity becomes the ground of his justification. According to this, men are not criminal on account of their moral depravity; but the more corrupt and depraved they are, the more guiltless! The plain English of this is, that they are not corrupt and criminal solely because they are so! A person must be less criminal, and must be less punished, the more criminal and vicious he is!! Then to ascertain whether a person is blamable or not, and punishable for doing an act, it is sufficient to see whether he violated any conscience, and let that be his punishment. For should we

learn that his intentions were bad, and of course, that he was corrupt and depraved, on that very account he must be excused. If he were sufficiently hardened to do the act without any twinges of conscience, then he must be entirely innocent! This appears to me to reverse the eternal principles of moral science, to shock the common sense of universal man, to divest human depravity of all restraint, and to pervert all correct notions of accountability.

7. Some seem to possess but very little moral sense. They have become "seared as with a hot iron." A great mental philosopher of this age, says, "It is a mistake to suppose that great criminals necessarily feel remorse. I talked with *Hare*, when in prison; and notwithstanding his atrocious deeds, he did not feel remorse in the slightest degree. *Bellingham* did not feel remorse; nor was the woman *Gottfried* troubled till disturbed by the law."* Such persons do not transgress conscience much, and cannot be punished much by it; but they do transgress the laws of God and society, made for general good; and by these laws, they can be, and they must be punished. The moral sentiments or feelings yield happiness by gratification; so do all other feelings. A man's moral feelings may be gratified by a good life; so far he is happy. Most all other feelings may be ungratified. Poverty, sickness, loss of friends, treachery, persecution, and a multitude of woes may thwart all his other feelings, and crush his soul. So that on the whole, his misery is far greater than his happiness. So the bad man may have his moral sense ungratified by a bad life; at the same time, all his other propensities may be gratified, and his happiness be greater than his misery. Other things may produce happiness besides virtue; and there are other causes of misery besides vice. Animals have sources of happiness and misery, without virtue or vice. So it is not true, that

*Combe's Lectures, delivered in New York, p. 206.

every one is as happy as he is good, and as miserable as he is bad.

8. Now it appears that voluntary actions, whether good or bad, yield natural enjoyment, in proportion as they accord with our inclinations. Undoubtedly mankind generally derive happiness from the practice of virtue, aside from all consequences not directly growing out of it. And the reason is, a majority of them are more gratified with virtuous than vicious pursuits. Mankind are generally more inclined to good than to evil. The moral sentiments and virtuous inclinations of most men predominate over those that are vicious. Even the pangs of remorse are not generally felt so much at the time that crime is committed, as after the evil inclinations which produced it have subsided, and purer and better feelings have returned. It is, therefore, the prevailing goodness of the affections, which brings condemnation; otherwise, there would be none; and that is often severest after considerable time has elapsed since the offence. But if this self-condemnation were sufficient punishment, no Bible would be necessary to teach the punishment of sin; because every sinner's experience would teach all that could be known on the subject, in a manner that could not be misunderstood. Yet the Bible does teach that, "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." It every where proclaims retribution, as if all men had not at all times experienced and known it. The Bible passes universal sentence of condemnation upon all sinners. And the languuage generally implies not that punishment *is* and *has been* always inflicted; but that it *shall* be. But if sin itself always does the work directly, the Bible might as well have taught that, fire would burn us, and admonished us against coming in contact with it; as to have taught what is the direct and uniform effect of sin upon us, which all would know by universal experience.

9. Again. If sin always punishes the sinner justly by

an infallible law of its nature, then it would be unjust for God to punish him in any other way. Yet he has done it. The Antideluvians were punished by a deluge. Pharoah and his host were drowned. The Egyptians were plagued and tormented for oppressing the Hebrews. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire. And many cities, Tyre, Sidon, and Babylon, melted away under the special judgments of Heaven. And when the Jews had become corrupt, God brought terrible calamities upon them, by means of the Babylonians, the Persians, Macedonians, Assyrians, and the Romans. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their followers, were signally destroyed for their sins. And many other interpositions of the divine hand, stretched out against the guilty, stand recorded as admonitory warnings to all people. But it may be objected that these were miraculous interpositions, and the days of miracles are now past. This affects not the question. If sin had already punished them, God could not have punished them over again even by a miracle. What! a just God work a miracle to do injustice! That would be a miracle indeed. These were punishments, which sin by its own action had not produced; therefore, this philosophy which we oppose, is not the doctrine of Christianity. But it is a part of the doctrine of skeptics, who deny that any thing is done, except by the laws of nature, without the direction of any controling mind. To us it appears evident that Christianity recognizes the special interposition of divine agency in rewards and punishments. If now, God has established nature, and left it to act forever by its own laws; and, as the day of miracles is past, is to pay no further attention to matters—we can then indeed expect no more retribution than nature produces—and no more future state than nature can give. And is the reign of the Mediator then past? or has he resigned his kingdom to the laws of nature? As miracles are past, has God laid down the rule for nature's guide and retired? If we have nothing more for God to do, especially in the busi-

ness of rewards and punishments, we may as well have none at all.

10. It may be asked, if sinful acts do not always torment the sinner, by their direct action upon him, why are they forbidden and punished, as they cannot injure the Deity? There are two good reasons. I assume it as an axiom in morals, that all sins are such acts as injure somebody, or have a tendency to do so: and that is the very reason and the only reason why they are sinful. They are of two classes. 1. Those which *directly* injure the sinner, and *indirectly* others. And 2. Those which *directly* injure others, and *indirectly* injure the sinner. Of the first class, are all habits and excesses pernicious to health, drunkenness, and suicide, and all practices, which act directly against the sinner. And these, however, all act indirectly against his friends and the community. All such sins of this class do, in fact, directly punish the offender to a great extent; and probably this would be the full extent of justice, if the evil were confined to him. But by far the greatest amount of sins are of the second class; viz. those committed against others. Murder, fraud, violence, seduction, and a dark and awful catalogue of crimes and oppressions, which man has practiced against his fellow man; causing the wide earth to wail with the sufferings of the innocent, oppression, bondage, and cruel wrongs. These are crimes which act not *directly* against the evil doer: and aside from the overruling hand of God, many of them would go unpunished, and the guilty triumph in iniquity. But by his unerring hand, they are made *indirectly*, and ultimately, and *infallibly* to injure the offenders themselves. They are those sins which do not directly punish themselves; but which God, by a diversity of means, will assuredly punish. The robber, that plunders his neighbor's property, commits a sin, which directly injures his neighbor. He may gratify his sordid feelings in the act, if he has but little conscience to trouble him. But indirectly and finally he will be made

to suffer. This social law is designed to secure the interests of the innocent from the depredations of the bad. He may be made a victim to the criminal law of the land. Besides, he indirectly injures himself, by violating a rule, which all men have a common interest in keeping sacred and inviolate. His example increases the general depravity, so as to render his own rights and interests less secure. He has aided to diminish the general morals—to lower the tone of public virtue and integrity, and consequently, to increase the perils and dangers of social life, in which he participates as much as others. So that all sin is injurious and pernicious, and all sin injures the sinner either directly or indirectly and finally. And all the consequences together may be considered ordained by heaven as punishment. The stings of conscience, when there is any conscience to be stung; the penalties of human law; the loss of public esteem; the impairing of health; the waste of property; and nameless other afflictions resulting indirectly from crime, should all be regarded as the dispensations of a righteous Providence in the punishment of sin. And whatever of these modes of retribution he may escape, the omniscient eye cannot be escaped. And the omnipotent hand, sooner or later will infallibly bring him to justice. And Infinite Wisdom and Goodness may have still other means of retribution, ultimately to be inflicted, should it be necessary for the great ends of justice and right, or the greatest good of rational beings. But more of this in its place.

11. Another and second reason why God forbids sin, in ultimate kindness to our race, is, that they may become capable of higher and more perfect happiness, than can be derived from the gratification of the lower propensities. However much the base passions and vicious feelings may be gratified by indulgence, these are not capable of yielding so full and pure enjoyment, as higher and purer inclinations will do. Man is unquestionably capable of more exquisite felicity than any of the species

of brutes, because he possesses finer and more exquisite sensibilities. Evil gratification is the happiness of the animal; the higher feelings cannot participate in it. The evil propensities are mostly of the animal kind. Their gratification is sensual and animal; and so low and grovling as to be unsatisfactory to persons of amiable dispositions and enlarged and cultivated affections. But virtuous inclinations aspire to higher objects; and are feasted on richer and healthier food. So that a person of high moral attainments is capable of more ample and perfect enjoyment, than one whose mind is but little elevated above the mere animal, in moral feelings. He approximates nearer to God, in principles and character; and thus partakes of stronger, more enduring, and more perfect elements of happiness. And such derive deeper and more substantial bliss from the pure fountains of good, and in acting from the exalted impulses of virtue, than the vitiated voluptuary can find in the pleasures of sense; and more than all the votaries of vice are capable of enjoying. Hence all the truly good will feel to respond to the Psalmist; "Great peace have they that love thy law." Also, "The work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." Hence, although the wicked *may* enjoy for a time, a kind of animal and imperfect pleasure in sin, they are incapable of a very pure and exalted bliss, until they emerge from their depravity, by the suppression and subjection of their vicious propensities; and by the cultivation and improvement of their higher sentiments and moral capabilities. This then is another good reason why sin should be forbidden, and why it is the interest of all to fortify themselves against its indulgences. For these reasons too, God has not only forbidden sin, but determined to destroy it. He has put into operation a grand system of means, adapted to our nature and condition, to our laws of mind and moral freedom, for the moral purification, renovation and exaltation of our race. And these means of course are to act in *perfect harmony* and accordance with the laws of mind, and

the voluntary agency of men. No other means would answer the purpose, and Infinite Wisdom has selected them, with a full knowledge of the obstacles to be overcome; and Divine Goodness and Power controls and directs them. Does any christian feel disposed to object to the success of the great enterprise? No, not one. All the good in heaven and on earth, thrill with the pious undying wish that all the wicked may become good.

12. I must say a word on the moral effects of the idea above controverted. We are all deeply responsible for the effects of our public teaching. True enough, persons of that opinion may be good; because most persons would be good without any penal considerations. Their moral feelings predominate. But we should consider the influence of the system on the *bad*. Suppose then all human laws abolished, as they should be, if sin always punishes itself justly; and all our children taught from infancy to fear no divine hand, except the action of natural laws; that people deserved, and would receive no other punishment for any thing, than the *uneasiness* they experience in the very act of sin; so that they were accountable to none but their own *moral sense*. They would then consider, that whatever contributed most to their pleasure, was of course right, and for their interest. Would they not soon learn to follow their strongest inclinations, which would yield them the fullest gratification? Would not the high moral sense, which now exerts so much influence, soon become almost extinct? And would not *public opinion*, which is derived mainly from our views of divine and human government, soon come down to the universal indulgence of what we now call vice? With no expectations of retribution direct from God or human government—the action of nature, our only fear, could we long retain our moral feelings—our religious restraints and discipline, or our christian progress and reforming power? If mankind are ever to be saved from sin by the workings of such a system, I have only dreamed—I know nothing of man.

CHAPTER X.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD, BY JESUS CHRIST.

On this subject, we must appeal to the instructions of the Bible. That Book exhibits Jesus as a Teacher, Mediator, Saviour, Prince, King, and Judge. He hath received a "kingdom and dominion," and prospectively, "all things are put under him." "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."—John iii. 35. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."—John xvii. 2. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour."—Acts v. 31. These passages indicate that in the divine economy, God hath delegated to his Son, *regal* authority over all men, and appointed him a kingdom. Although his authority, legislative and judiciary, extends over all, by virtue of his appointment; yet his kingdom, in scripture phraseology, generally implies only the voluntary subjects of his reign. This kingdom is his *reign* of divine influence and moral power. When it first dawned on earth, it was a single ray—a "grain of mustard seed," or a "little leaven," but it was to increase and be promulgated through the lapse of time and the progress of ages, till the boundless universe of intelligences should yield to its sceptre. And then, when the great mission of the Saviour shall be accomplished, his mediatorial reign or kingdom is to end.—(See 1st Cor. xv. 24–28.) An opinion has long prevailed in the christian church, that no judgment is to be executed; and of course no *sin punished*, or obedience rewarded, until the end of

time, or the end of Messiah's reign. And that then, at that awful day, the dead will all be raised from the rest of ages; and all the living and all the dead will come forth together to the bar of Christ, and be subjected to a *form* of trial. That then, all such and such *only*, as *died* christians, whatever their morals in life may have been, are to be admitted to heaven. And that then, all others, whatever may have been their lives, are to be consigned over to intolerable and immortal pain! I object to this view of the subject, from the following reasons, among many others that might be given:

1. *This would consign millions to hopeless perdition, who had never an opportunity to become christians and escape it.*

All that die in infancy—all ideots—all the heathen—and millions, even in christian countries, who live and die without any adequate means of comprehending christian duty, or the ground upon which their everlasting all is suspended. Some are reared under the influence of the most vitiating and corrupting circumstances; so that their reformation could not be reasonably expected; unless contrary to christian maxims, we may "expect to gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles." While others are surrounded with so much christian influence, that its purifying energy can scarcely be resisted. Yet Christ teaches, that "He who knoweth his Master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes: while he that knoweth it not, shall be beaten with few." Some die very young, who have enjoyed but the slightest means of christian knowledge; while others live to great age, and only in the last stage, yield to the gospel. Surely I must think the "ways of God are equal," and his all perfect justice requires the full consideration of all circumstances that enter into the formation of character, in the distribution of rewards and punishments.

2. *This view of the subject repudiates the idea, that any rewards and punishments are experienced in this life, contrary to the Bible and known facts.*

In the preceding chapter, it has been proved that men are very often, and to a great extent, rewarded and punished in this life. Indeed this is so notoriously a matter of fact, that thousands honestly believe, that full and ample justice is done in all cases; and doubt the existence of any retribution beyond this life.

3. *I object because it effectually repudiates the great doctrine of retribution according to our actions; which is one of the plainest and most important truths of revelation.*

"He that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and God is no respector of persons." "God will render to every man *according* to his *deeds*." "He will by no means clear the guilty." Such like declarations are very numerous in all parts of the Bible; and they must be untrue, if such notion of judgment be correct. The advocates of this theory tell us that little children, who die before becoming accountable, go to heaven without getting religion before death. Some how they are supposed to be made christians at death, or immediately after. But if they live to acquire reason enough to make them accountable, and die after that, without conversion, they must be damned! Upon this theory, would it not be the *safe side*, to give them all death, before they become old enough to be damned, as some tender mothers have been known to do? But this system teaches that the little child who lives but one minute—nay, the sixtieth part of a minute, after he becomes accountable, and then dies unconverted, must go to judgment unconverted, and from the judgment to the flames of hell, unpittied! I say *unpitted*; for it is supposed its childless mother may be in heaven, praising God for his mercy and justice! Say not that our kind affections and memories will not go with us into the future. If no kind affections are there, and no memory of the past, *we* shall not be there. And is the cheated mother to praise and adore God, through ignorance of his doings? Reader, you know it to be impossible; so

do I. By the same theory, another person may live to hoary age in sin, drink deep of the turbid fountains of forbidden pleasure, and stain his soul with the darkest and most horrid crimes; yet get religion and die a christian, and go unwhipped of justice, to heaven. Were this christianity, I would rather be an atheist—it would be a shame to be a christian. Little Henry, an amiable boy, dies at 15 years of age unconverted. David, his brother, a perverse and vicious wretch, lives on to commit a hundred crimes, and at 60 gets religion, and dies. He rejected Christ four times as long, and was ten times as corrupt as his little brother. They meet at the *awful* judgment. The elder brother is received to endless bliss because he got religion before he died. Henry has no excuse, because he lived only one fourth part the time without religion! He goes to hell—and David pitties him not! He never cherished tender feelings in this life, and he is, therefore, fitted for *such* a heaven. Is this the retribution of the Bible? If so, I want no Bible. Nature revolts and shudders at such partiality and cruelty. A pirate at sea, murders several comparatively innocent persons. He is convicted, and finally gets religion. He dies, and meets his hapless victims at "the *flaming bar*." He is a saint now, and they are unconverted. They stand before the "awful bar" expecting justice. But look, that murderer is caressed and crowned with glory. But his victims are hurled away to quenchless flames. They lift their eyes in amazement and horror, and see the *lucky* murderer; and hear his joyous shouts and triumphs. They see his bloody hands raised in admiration and joy before the throne; and they read in broad capitals, stretched over the lurid canopy of hell, like letters of fire, "*This is the righteous judgment of the universe, according to works.*" Would they comprehend the righteousness and justice and goodness of this verdict? Would they respond in humble acquiescence to this display of impartial retribution? If this be the justice of the saviour, at the judgment, he must in-

deed change his character and principles to become a judge, as many suppose he will. Such is the unjust and unrighteous system, which would give the joys of heaven to such as *die* christians; and inflict unceasing torments on all others, without the least regard to the morals or crimes of their lives! Hence it is, that many suppose, thieves, assassins, and all sorts of criminals as likely to get to heaven as any; and that the most upright and virtuous are as likely to be damned as any; or rather that they are in the greatest danger of all. Call this theory injustice—call it partiality—call it madness—blasphemy—or what you will. But I conjure you in the sacred name of reason—of christianity—and of common sense—do not call it justice. Do not outrage all moral truth, by such an unhallowed thought.

4. *I object to it because, it repudiates and sets aside all the salutary restraints of christian retribution.*

Though the good will do good of choice, and act from the impulse of spontaneous virtuous feeling; the depraved and evil minded, need the encouragement of hope, and the restraints of fear, to guide their actions. But a system, which reckons only from the *dying state*, and takes no account of the conduct of life, overturns all the sanctions of virtue, and opens the doors of unrestrained indulgence and crime. Almost every person who believes this, thinks he has been converted, or when he has sinned to his heart's content, he means to get religion, so as to escape all punishment. Most of the vicious, and great criminals throughout christendom believe in an endless hell; it is perfectly congenial to their cruel and depraved minds to believe in such a cruel and unjust system. But they do not expect to go there. No. In all their horrid plans—in all their dark and dreadful deeds, they mean to be converted at last and escape hell. They mean to indulge their depraved feelings, and cautiously approach the very borders of hell, and sport with its fires; then slip aside, cheat justice, and go to heaven! This is the reason that believers in it dare to sin—this

the reason, that all the sombre gloom and dark horrors that have been held over the world—the eternal fires that have flamed and thundered from christian pulpits, have never reformed mankind, but only made them worse in proportion as they have drunk in the doctrine and its own malignant spirit. Believers in this do not expect to be held accountable at all for their lives nor their deeds; but only for the *manner* in which they *die*. If, after plundering mankind, seducing innocence, crushing the poor, reveling in crime, and cheating earth and heaven, they only *submit* to God at last, they think all justice will turn aside for their accommodation! This is the very pith and essence of all the false doctrines of all ages and nations. A scheme invented as an opiate to guilt; and which has paralyzed the reforming and restraining power of all religion.

5. I object to this view of a judgment, because it represents God as bringing the world together for useless pomp and splendid mockery.

It is reasonable to suppose, that the Judge of all the earth, has an object in all he does; and that this object is a good one. Indeed it must be so, if he is a good being, as all admit he is. His object then must be good, and worthy a ruler of the universe. If then the irreversible doom of all is fixed at death, why a formal trial? What is the great and good object? Is all the parade and pomp of "assembled worlds" a useless display—a solemn exhibition of injustice, partiality, and revenge? Is it to mock the rejected millions, with an open exhibition of their cruel fate, and the splendid paraphernalia of mighty power, divested of all justice and goodness? It has been before proved, that all retribution must be designed to benefit somebody, in order to be just. But such a tremendous doom for not becoming a christian before death, can be of no use to men in this world, as it has no connection with moral actions. It takes no account of the morality or immorality of our lives, and can therefore have no moralizing influence. And it can

hereafter be of no use to the damned, as they are not intended to be benefitted. Who then is to be benefitted by such a judgment and punishment, so cruel, vindictive, revengeful, partial, hopeless, and endless? Indeed one orthodox Doctor of Divinity has given us *one object* of this endless punishment—thus: "It may, also, for aught we know, be necessary for securing the saints against falling in a future state."* This is the *benefit* then to result from endless pain. The saints are to have such strong inclinations to sin, that nothing but the constant view of hell can restrain them! Well, if there is no change after death, I do not know but it may be so. The doctor seems to expect to go to heaven as a choice of evils, rather than to go to hell; and he thinks obedience will be so repugnant to his inclinations, when he gets there, that nothing but the terrors of hell, in plain sight, can restrain him? What a christian! It would seem to me, if the saints cannot be restrained in any other way, that it would be a more impartial way, to let them be in heaven, say, a thousand years, and perform their unwilling services; then let them go to hell, while the rest go up and perform these services as long; and so in this way, keep up the harmony of the universe and give to all an equal chance and variety. Again the doctor explains the *object* of endless pain in these elegant words: "The debased condition also of the inhabitants of the world of wo, appears the more low and wretched, by being set over against the pure society that surrounds the throne of the eternal. Songs of redemption rise in higher notes, and mingle with a heavenlier harmony, when contrasted with the ceaseless wail and blasphemies of the damned. While on the other hand, that same wail of wo appears the more dreadful from the contrast which it forms with the undying praises of heaven."† This "*pure society,*" are those who cannot be

* Lectures against Universalism, by Rev. Joel Parker, D. D., p. 155. † Same, p. 27.

restrained from sin, except by the sight of hell torments! Such *benevolent* feelings as the above extract indicates, may do for Doctors of Divinity; but they are sufficiently ferocious to chill the heart and freeze the blood of ordinary sinners. I appeal to that eternal justice, which presides supreme over all, if this be the object of it's awful purpose. I appeal to that deep, undying sympathy which heaven breathes into the soul. Nay—I appeal to Almighty God, the boundless fullness of all *good*, if this partiality and cruelty can be the truth.

6. *I object to this theory, because it is contrary to all analogy.*

All human governments have a criminal jurisprudence in operation, during the whole progress of the state. Reigning and judging are cotemporaneous with each other. Judgment is one of the essential functions of all well regulated governments. But to delay judgment to the end of a state; or to let its awards turn upon a particular state of mind toward the close of life, would perfectly nullify and evade all the objects of legislation.

II. The reader is now invited to a more rational view of the subject. The judgment begins and ends with the state. The Bible recognizes Christ as a judge throughout his kingdom. He began to judge when he began to reign; and he will continue to judge, till he gives up the kingdom to God the Father. And his office of judge is cotemporaneous and coextensive with that of Mediator. Indeed his mediatorial work of reconciling the world to God, is to be accomplished in part through the medium of judgment.

Proof: "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper; and shall execute *judgment and justice in the earth.*"—Jer. xxiii. 5. All agree that this Branch and King was Christ. He was positively to reign and prosper; and to execute judgment and justice in the earth. This text is positive proof if there were no other. But we notice others: "And Jesus said; for

judgment, I am come into this world."—John ix. 39. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."—John v. 22. "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also because he is the son of man."—John v. 27. "*Now is* the judgment of this world."—John xii. 31. Without multiplying quotations, the above are to the point; and cannot be frittered away, so as not to satisfy every person of sense, that Jesus is *now* the appointed judge—now judging the world. And it is manifest that all the judgments exhibited to view, in the christian dispensation, are to be executed by Jesus Christ, *during* his mediatorial reign. The bible language is very figurative. Almost every thing is dressed up in the imagery, which characterized all the oriental compositions of antiquity; and the sacred writers borrowed the poetic imagery, with which they clothed up many of their descriptions of judgment, from the pomp and splendor of earthly monarchies, courts of judicature, forms of trial, and sentences of acquittal and condemnation. But all should be divested of their metaphorical imagery; and interpreted in accordance with Messiah's reign, character, and purposes. Judgment is executed in various ways and times. Individuals, cities, and nations, have their "day of judgment" whenever special retributions are inflicted upon them. The dreadful chastisements inflicted in the fall of Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capurnaum, and others, were *their* day of judgment. And it is probable that the people of those cities, some of them at least, might have been subjected to some punishment afterwards. Our Lord addresses them in denunciations, and then declares: "But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of judgment, than for you."—Mat. xi. 22. Simply meaning that, as these cities sinned against greater light than did Tyre and Sidon, their punishment should be more severe. Says Clarke, "*day of judgment*, may either refer to that *particular* time, in which God visits for iniquity, or to that great day in

which he will judge the world by the Lord Jesus Christ. The day of Sodom's judgment was that in which it was destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaheaven—Gen. xix. 24; and the *day* of judgment to Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capurnaum, was the time in which they were destroyed by the Romans."—See Com. in loc. The Doctor here admits these cities to have had their day of judgment, at the particular time of their calamities; yet he thinks reference might have been made to a *great* day of judgment. But when we get the *real* and *literal* sense of a text, we want no other meanings to account for the declaration. The unparalleled sufferings and destruction of Judea and Jerusalem, and the gift of the kingdom of God to the Gentiles;* the "everlasting destruction" of the enemies of Christ, "from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power" are described in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew, in all the pomp of royal adjudication, and in language of splendid hyperbole; yet all, in its true sense, was executed before that generation passed away. Even the *coming* of the son of man, in "flaming fire" and sitting upon the "throne of his glory."† It is not revealed that none of these persons were punished beyond this life. How long they were to remain "banished from the presence of the Lord," or without communion with Christ, is not revealed. But it *is revealed* that they are to come in, in the "dispensation of the fullness of times," or before the end of Christ's reign.—See Rom. xi. 8–36, inclusive.

2. Attention is now called to Paul's declaration to the Athenians: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by

* See Mat. xxi, 43.

† See Mat. xvi. 27, 28, also xxiv. 32–34; Mark viii. 38, also ix. 1, also xiii. 28–30; Luke ix. 26, 27, also xxi. 31, 32; and 2d Thes. i. 6–9; also read the whole xiii. Isa., also xxxiv; also Joel ii. 28, 32, compared with Acts ii. 14–20.

that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."—Acts xvii. 31. This is the judgment *day;* and some think it must mean a few hours time. But Dr. Butterworth says, a day often means "*time in general—gospel times.*" To harmonize with the scriptures, the *day* of this text, must mean the gospel day, day of Christ, or mediatorial reign. During this day, long or short, Christ was to reign and judge the world; and assurance was given unto all of this appointment, judgment, and reign, by his resurrection from the dead. But how was he to judge the world; by what rule; what principles? Was he to acquit the vilest and bloodiest criminals because they repented before death; and damn the most pure and virtuous because they did not? No. Was he to bless the elect without regard to their lives, and damn the reprobates because they would be reprobated from all eternity? No, none of this. But he was to "judge the world *in righteousness.*" That is the rule. It is a good rule—a rule by which we may presume God always acts. It is the very rule we have all along contended for. We often hear it said, that he will not always act by this same rule—but at least we find here, that he will judge the world by it. Though many say, he will then change his character and the principles of his government; that he will then leave the mercy seat, throw off his radiant robes of mercy and kindness and love, and ascend the judgment seat; that he will there sit so inexorable, stern, and gloomy, that all worlds will look, and tremble as they gaze. But if the principles by which he governs the world now are right, why change them? If not right, why have they been acted upon at all? But we perceive that the judgment of Christ is to be a *righteous* judgment. Immutable and eternal justice is the principle which irradiates his throne, and never will he descend from that throne, till his mission and judgment are finished, and his sceptre *and* kingdom are resigned. Again, says Paul: "But

after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the *righteous judgment* of God; who will render unto every man *according to his deeds.*"—Rom. ii. 5–6. This again is a *righteous* judgment, awarding to every man according to his deeds. "For as many as have sinned without law, *(the written law,)* shall also perish without law. In the day (or season) when God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel."—Rom. ii. 12–16. This indicates a just and righteous distribution of rewards and punishments, graduated exactly according to circumstances and degrees of desert. But an objector may say, the award is to be heaven on the one side, and hell on the other, because the Apostle says; "To them, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honor and immortality, *eternal life,*" &c.—Rom. ii. 7. And this eternal life, it is supposed, must be the final endless happiness of the christian. Now I answer, that this phrase seldom, if ever, means the final condition of man; but indicates the spiritual life, the moral elevation, the blissful hopes and heavenly joys of the christian united to the head of the Church, whether in this present life or in future time, so long as the reign of Christ shall continue. This eternal life is that moral vitality which the christian draws from the saviour during his administration. And his endless existence afterwards, is to be derived directly from God, and not through the Mediator. We have no evidence whatever, of either the eternal life or everlasting punishment, (both adjectives from the same Greek,) awarded under his dispensation, extending beyond the limits of his reign, or the bounds of his authority.*—

*Upon this point, the reader is requested to examine with candid attention, John iii. 36; iv. 14; v. 24–25, vi. 33, 40, 47, 51, 54; xvii. 3; Matt. xxv. 46, with its context; 1 John v. 11, 12, and the whole New Testament wherever the phrase occurs. I omit to write out the passages for the sake of brevity.

The righteous judgment of Christ must have an object in perfect harmony with his character, and all the other measures, operations and designs of his reign. And what is the grand object of his mission? "To seek and to save that which is lost"—to save the world from sin. "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of the cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether things in earth or things in heaven." —Col. i. 19, 20. By things in earth and things in heaven, I understand the living and the departed. This is the object—the purpose. For this he has become the Mediator—the way—the door—the resurrection and the life, and the judge of the living and the dead. As saith an apostle; "Who shall give account unto him that is ready to judge the quick *(living)* and the dead."—1 Pet. iv. 5. He was *then ready* to judge both living and dead, many centuries ago. How can it be said, that he is not ready yet to judge the living and the dead? That he has not yet ascended the judgment seat? Not only is the judgment now progressing on the living and the dead, but both the living and the dead, are under the training influence of the gospel; for the next words are, "For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they *might be judged* according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."—1 Pet. iv. 6. I have given the most plain and natural sense to these passages. I know some understand them to be figurative, and that the dead here means the morally dead. But they were to be judged according to men in the flesh, which implies to me that men not in the flesh were referred to. When there is no evidence that a text is not to have a literal interpretation, we are to understand it literally, according to all just rules of interpretation. And there is, in my opinion, no evidence whatever, that Peter here did not mean what his language naturally implies. And this sense accords with the prevailing opinions of the primitive christians, as well as with the most

natural import of many passages of revelation. When compared with 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20, it appears to me indisputable, that the writer supposed the work of the Mediator was not bounded to this short life, where millions are not affected by it at all. But coextensive with the human race, is "God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." All his divine efforts and means act in beautiful harmony: and all aim at the consummation of the same sublime purpose—the moral assimilation of the kindred universe to his own exalted principles and character. "I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall Judge the quick *(living)* and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom."—1 Tim. iv. 1. This text also appears to me to teach, that, during the kingdom or reign of Christ, he was to judge not only the living, but also the dead or departed. Both the living and departed are under the same government—the training of the same dispensation; judged, acquitted, or condemned, by the same principles; and reformed by the same or similar discipline; only when divested of our *animalism*, we are in a more favorable condition for the efficient influence of the Saviour's moral kingdom.

3. It may be asked: May not the sentence of condemnation from the Messiah extend beyond his reign? This leads to the inquiry: What will be the moral condition of mankind after so long an administration of the Son of God? After this Saviour—this moral conqueror, has so long ruled and exerted his soul subduing influence, what will be the condition of his kingdom? Will a part of his subjects then be impenitent and unreconciled, so that he must then give up some to God, and the rest to the devil? Will he fail and be discouraged, and leave his work but half accomplished? No—his full and perfect success is the plain doctrine of the Bible. The proof of this would open an immense field of discussion. My limits will not permit even a synopsis of the evidence. His moral kingdom is every where represented as finally triumphant. But I shall only notice here the following

considerations. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God; even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power; for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. Death, the last enemy, shall be destroyed.* For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—1 Cor. xv. 24–28. Did not the Apostle here mean to teach the universal submission of all men to Christ? What do you say reader? Do you not see that he must have meant either, that all, at that time, will be unwillingly subjected to his power, or that they will all become the willing subjects of his reign? You see no other sense possible. Well then if the first sense cannot be sustained, we establish the last. Let us then observe, 1. All are then to be subjected to him in the one sense or the other. 2. In the progress of his work, a time will come when he will have but one enemy left, and that is death, and that enemy is to be destroyed. And that is the only one of his enemies which is to be destroyed. And this could not be the *last* enemy, if others should then be existing. All the rest of his enemies are to be "subdued unto him." Now if this in some cases be only an *unwilling* subjection to his power, they would be his enemies still. And death would not be the *last* enemy, as Paul declares it will be.

3. If Paul meant nothing more than an unwilling subjection to his power, then he is convicted of predicting an event as in the distant future, which had already

*The 26th verse, reads in the original, "Death the last enemy shall be destroyed," and not as in our common version. There seems to have been pains taken to disguise the true sense of this text.

happened. All men were then already subjected to his power, though not in a willing submission. Christ himself said: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."—Matt. xxviii. 18. "As thou hast given him power over *all* flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou has given him."—John xvii. 2. This is proof positive; and leaves no other submission necessary or possible, afterwards, but a voluntary one. 4. All of whom Paul spoke, including all enemies, except death which is to be destroyed, are to be "subdued unto him," in one and the same way. There is only one kind of conquest or subjection referred to here. All are to be subdued in one way, with only one exception; and that is "him who put all things under him." As this one exception is named, it proves that there is no other exception; that the writer intended to be understood in the most universal sense of his language. 5. The language implies, that *in the same sense*, that all were to be subdued or become subjected to Christ, he himself would then be subject to God, that put all things under him. 6. And last. This subjugation of all to Christ, and him to God, is to be accomplished, in order that God may be "*all in all.*" Now good reader, if you can find any other rational sense to this passage, whoever you be, you will accomplish what the learning and ingenuity of all christendom, has never yet been able to do. I myself have not *one* doubt, that the Apostle intended to teach the ultimate reconciliation of all men. Can there be a devil —a hell—millions of enemies—when the last enemy is destroyed—all subdued to Christ; and he, with his whole empire resigned to God—and God *all in all?* If you can still think so, prejudice must have more power over your mind than divine revelation. I will however, refer to another declaration of similar import. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, (in his mediatorial kingdom) and given him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth. And that ev-

ery tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*—Phil. ii. 9.

None would ever suppose this to denote an unwilling subjection, or aught less than universal spiritual worship, unless he was extremely anxious to avoid the conclusion, which I have not a doubt, was the doctrine of Paul and of the primitive church for several centuries—a moral conquest of the universe—a consummation of the vast designs of infinite love—the assimilation of all to God.†

4. From the above view, it appears, that the scene of the Saviour's operations, is not confined to the living, as many suppose; but embraces both the visible and the invisible; "heaven and earth and under the earth;" and all human beings are given over to his discipline, judgment,

*I have not given this text exactly as in our common version; but have endeavored to give the more exact sense of the original, according to learned critics. But the reader will perceive, it is no more favorable to my theory than even the bungling version given by royal authority.

†There is a text in John xii. 47, which would seem at first view to forbid the idea that Jesus came to be a Judge as well as a saviour It reads thus: "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I Judge him not: for I came not to judge the world; but to save the world." This difficulty originates in the vagueness of language. It may be made clear, by considering that the original term for *judge* has different meanings. *Butterworth* says, it sometimes means in the Bible, "*rashly to censure.*" Give it this sense here, and it reads "*I rashly censure him not.*" Or the word *condemn* might express the sense here. And the same original is often rendered *condemn* in the New Testament. "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I condemn him not; for I came not to condemn the world; but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that condemneth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall condemn him in the last day," (or dispensation.) This sense is necessary to make these texts harmonize with the declaration of the saviour, as quoted in this chapter.

and moral training. His kingdom is seen to rise on the dark earth—its scintillations enlighten our minds and warm our hearts—it reaches beyond sublunary bounds —trains departed millions to its principles—and, in the glorious progress of its mighty energy, renovates and exalts our race. The work of redemption, salvation, judgment, justice, and mercy, is not perfected here, but must progress, till all shall be judged, disciplined, and saved. Till "all the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations, shall worship before him."—Psa. xxii. 27.

ONE OBJECT does all means embrace,
All centre in one vast design,
All Judgment, Justice, Love, and Grace,
In perfect GOOD, divinely shine.

CHAPTER XI.

OF FUTURE EXISTENCE—THE RESURRECTION—AND FUTURE RETRIBUTION.

Among Universalists, some believe all Retribution to be in the present state of being; others believe christian discipline not perfected or finished in this state; and this state, not a purgatorial state, but the present mental and moral state, modified by different circumstances, is to be continued on beyond this life. That the very moral and intellectual condition of the soul at death, is to be the condition in which every one begins after death. That after death, the spiritual nature of man, freed from animal influences, will possess the general laws of existence, moral agency and accountability; and subject to motive influences and the operation of circumstances, as now; only that the circumstances of that mode of being will be much more favorable to the developement and perfection of his being than the present.—That although christian discipline is experienced imperfectly by some here, it is to be more abundantly experienced hereafter: and that those who die in infancy, all heathen, and all men are finally to attain an enlarged and exalted growth, in all the moral elements of christianity. That all are to become imbued with christian feeling, more fully; but by a process of training similar in its nature to that by which men are now inducted into Christ. Both these classes are Universalists, because both believe in final universal salvation from sin and misery. A perfect union of feeling and fellowship exists generally, and ought to exist universally, between

the advocates of these conflicting opinions. And it is hoped this spirit will continue, because we are not sectarians, and think there should be but one test of christian fellowship in this world; and that test should be, *Faith in Christ, and a good life.* While all should have perfect liberty to investigate and judge for themselves, on all subordinate matters; without censure and without reproach. This anti-sectarian spirit results naturally from that great point of christian faith, which distinguishes us from others. On both sides of this question, there are able, amiable, and worthy advocates. And we agree in general fundamental principles, and only differ in the time and manner of carrying them into effect. It is not my intention to seek a controversy on this question, nor to go into a full argument in relation to future existence and retribution; but only to give, in this connexion, a brief sketch of my own ideas on this subject. In the heat of controversy, it appears to me, on the question of *endless* misery, some of our friends have inadvertently gone into an opposite extreme. And upon "a second sober thought," I think they will finally come back to a middle ground, to which their opponents are rapidly advancing; and where at last, it is hoped, there will be a happy meeting of the parties; and a termination of this long protracted controversy on endless misery. There, "the lion and the lamb may lie down together." That orthodox christendom is gradually approximating to this point, is known to all observing men.

I. My first object is to show, *that the present life is a kind of infancy to a progressive higher and endless existence.*

Surely so far as nature sheds light upon the future, the British poet was about right:

> "Heaven from all creatures, hides the book of fate,
> All but the page prescribed, the present state."

And it is true that the writers of the Old Testament had very little knowledge of the future. And probably

on this account, as the Jews were so little instructed in relation to the future, rewards and punishments were exhibited in a more special, definite, and tangible manner, in the present state, than they have been since the Saviour's day. Jesus "brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel," and by bringing to view our higher destiny, has unfolded higher and stronger motives to virtue and obedience. Some suppose, when this body dies, we cease to exist as conscious beings, until we are resuscitated after a lapse of ages, or at some unknown distant future period. But I ask, if I am still to be, why is my existence to be suspended for hundreds of thousands of ages? Why should my existence commence, before its time, to be so fearfully and awfully suspended? Why put me here at all, if there is no connexion between this life and the next? Suppose I cease to be at death, and after the lapse of many ages, a person is formed of my dust, with a constitution differing entirely from mine, would that be me? Would it not be another being with whom I have no connexion? What interest have I in him or he in me? This cessation of being—this temporary annihilation seems to me, totally to sever us from hereafter; to break the golden chain that binds the present and the future. To sweep away forever all our interests in future being—to limit all our labors—all our improvements—all our aspirations and hopes—and all the dear objects and interests that christianity unfolds, to this brief life, as totally and perfectly as skepticism itself.

2. Says Paul: "There is one body and one spirit." The body is the animal, which dies. And it dies because it is animal. And the spirit—the moral and intellectual nature has no farther use for it. There is no reason to think it will ever be resuscitated, but much reason to suppose it will not. All philosophical facts forbid it. If we have the animal in a future state, we must have an animal constitution, with all its wants and propensities. Some bodies die in premature growth, some much

decayed by age, and some deformed. Nay, every eight or ten years wears away one body, and gives us a new one, by a natural process of the animal economy. So that every aged man must have had six or eight different bodies in the course of his life. Besides the very same matter which constitutes the bodies of one generation, may become component parts of the bodies of another. But man has the germ of a higher nature—a spiritual, rational, and moral existence. Which propably is not immortal in its constitution, but is to be retained in being by the power of God, so as not to become extinct, though it may die metaphorically in sin. The resurrection consists in the renovation of this spiritual nature. Its growth, expansion, developement, maturity, and perfection; its progressive and final full induction into Christ; an immortal and incorruptible constitution. This progressive resurrection begins whenever any person begins to draw spiritual life and renovation from Christ. For he is "the resurrection and the life."

3. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from *death* to *life*." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." These passages and many more of the same class, seem to imply, that the great work of the Saviour is to raise up the moral and spiritual world, from weakness, sin, and corruption, to power, glory, incorruption, and immortality; and that this sublime work is often commenced even before animal death. John vi. 47; also v. 24, 25.

4. Listen to Paul: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye *are risen* with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Again, "If ye be *risen* with Christ, seek those things which are above." Again, "That I may know

him, and the *power of his resurrection*, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." This language seems to imply, that he labored and struggled after spiritual attainments, and conformed unto the death of Christ, by subjecting himself to like persecutions and reproach, that he might put on more of the Saviour; and make farther and higher progress in the resurrection. Again, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Paul seems to suppose, that we have a house ready at the dissolution of this tabernacle, and not that we must be annihilated for some hundred thousand years, till this old tabernacle shall be fitted up and repaired for us. Again, "Therefore, we are always confident knowing that whilst we are at *home in the body*, we are *absent* from the Lord. We are confident I say, and willing rather to be *absent* from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Mark the phraseology here. The body not himself, but a tabernacle—a home—absent from the body, and present somewhere else. "Ye, I think it meet as long as *I am in* this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must *put off* this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." This language does not indicate an extinction of being, but the putting off an outward form—the material—the animal. Col. ii. 12, also iii. 1; Phil. iii. 10, 11; 2d Cor. v. 1, 6, 8; 2d Pet. i. 13, 14.

5. When the Sadducees interrogated the Saviour in relation to the resurrection of the dead, after some exposition of the subject, he says: "Now that the dead *are* raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is *not* a God of the *dead*, but of the *living; for all live unto him.*" Here I understand Jesus to teach that these patriarchs were

still existent, though their outward forms had perished. The Lord is not a God of the dead, but of the living. And as Moses called him the God of these persons, they were, therefore, alive. As if he had argued thus: "Now you know it is not proper to call the Lord the God of the dead; because whatever literally dies of man, ceases to be a part of him; yet Moses called the Lord the God of these persons, who had long since suffered animal death; therefore it must be that these patriarchs still survive in a resurrection state. So that the Lord is their God; for after animal death, all men live unto him." Luke xx. 37, 38.

6. Again, hear the Saviour: "And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." By reference to the context, it will be seen, that the Divine Teacher was instructing his disciples to help and bless the poor; and to encourage them to do this, he wishes them to understand, that although the poor cannot re-reward them, yet they shall be remunerated. How? Not with worldly goods or temporal riches. Not by rising from the dead millions of ages hence, in common with all, whether good or bad. But they should be recompensed at the "resurrection of the just." In other words, by thus fulfilling the law of love; feeding the hungry and alleviating misery, you will become assimilated to me, who am the resurrection and the life. You will pass from death to life as do all the just and the good. You will sooner partake of those moral elements which are destined to perfect your existence. You will feel and enjoy the incipient workings of that renovating power, which is finally to overcome the world. You will accelerate your progress in everlasting life; and taste a rich reward in the prelibations of heaven, and the ever brightening prospect of glory and immortality through the resurrection. Luke xiv. 14.

7. A good argument in favor of this view of the subject may be drawn from Paul's familiar illustration.

"But some will say, how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool! that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bear grain," &c. Look at the process of a grain of wheat sowed in the earth. Should the whole grain die, it would never live again. It would become extinct so far as identity is concerned. But the gross and outward clothing of the grain dies and decays like the sensuous animal nature of man; and out of this there comes forth a living undying germ, *at the very time the other portions of the grain die.* But this germ is not *instantly matured* for harvest; but gradually grows up to perfection, greatly increased in value and quantity. By this illustration, I infer, that the whole man dies not, but only his animal nature, as "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." But this spiritual nature, not ceasing to be, acquires new capabilities and powers, and progresses onward, unfolding its moral and intellectual capacities, until it is finally matured in an immortal and incorruptible constitution in the image of Christ. "For as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "For as in Adam all die, even so, in Christ shall all be made alive." And who will say it is not a plain doctrine of the Gospel, that during the mediatorial reign of Christ, human nature—the whole human race, shall be renovated and exalted by his training and influence? Now we see weakness and imperfection to characterize universal man; but we see in the hands of the Messiah, a system of moral means—judgment, retribution, the attractions of divine love, and all other means necessary, to advance and elevate him to his glorious destiny. As considerable time elapses between the death of the old grain and the maturity of the new, the analogy suggests the idea, that we do not start instantly into the full fruition of our destiny at death; but that our attainments may be gradual. 1st *Cor. xv. 35, 36, 22.*

8. If the reviviscency of our animal nature is not to be expected, it follows that death destroys forever the instincts which war against virtue, and all the animal elements of active sin. So far as all these are concerned, he that is dead is freed from sin. But the youthful soul may still be very defective in its moral acquirements. The mind itself is capable of ignorance, of ingratitude, and of moral apathy, and also of happiness and of misery; but when the body dies, it will probably receive new powers, adapting it to its condition and further progress. I consider Progression one of the unchangeable laws of our minds. The human mind must necessarily have been created finite; and it must necessarily always continue finite. Then there must always be attainments in knowledge and morals beyond its reach. Though it were to soar toward the perfection of the Deity, and climb on forever up the boundless heights of ever increasing and expanding power, still there must ever remain a higher hill, a deeper vale, and a wider field unexplored, still opening onward for the exercise of its everlasting efforts. There is but three possible conditions then for a finite mind. The first is that of retrogradation; and this would bring it down to nothing. The second is an inactive condition; and if men's minds become perfectly inactive in the future state, they could neither have happiness nor misery, and might as well be annihilated; but if they are active, they must think—they must learn—they must advance—and endless progression must be an inevitable law of all finite beings possessing the attribute of immortality.

The doctrine that there will be no change after death is equivalent to no future existence. An inactive mind is no mind at all; and a conscious, active, finite mind must change by the necessary and essential laws of its existence. If all the saints are at death to enter upon a fixed state, and learn no more, they must think nothing, do nothing, and enjoy nothing. It would be a lazy, sleepy, and worthless condition indeed. It would be

worse than solitary imprisonment—like a dreamless, hopeless, rayless slumber of death.

9. I know of but one objection to this view of the future; and I think that not formidable. It may be argued that the resurrection of Jesus was such as we may expect; and that his was a resurrection of the body. That he possessed an animal body seems indisputable; and that that body disappeared at the annunciation of his resurrection, is also true; but whether it was instantaneously decomposed or resuscitated is problematical. At all events, it was necessary to give his disciples visible and tangible evidence of his existence, that he should assume a material form and appearance. They could no otherwise be certified of the future. But it should be observed, that he entered the room where they were assembled, in a manner that no material body could do; the doors being shut so as to prevent the ingress of their enemies.—John xx. 19. Therefore his body then was not animal and material. Besides, Angels appeared on the occasion, in a tangible and visible form, as much as did the Saviour. Yet who supposes they possessed animal bodies? And many that slept came out of their graves and appeared unto many; but we have no account of them afterwards. Were they any thing more than apparitions designed to attest the stupendous displays of Divine power? Were not all these exhibitions designed to teach Future Existence through the *senses?* and was not that the *only* way that such a revelation *could* be made, or at least the *best* way? I submit these suggestions to the reader's judgment, with the confession that my own mind preponderates to this conclusion.

II. From the above we assume, that the perpetuity of man's existence is established. And I think it most rational and scriptural to conclude, that we start the next state exactly as we leave this in relation to our moral acquirements. Memory must accompany us or we lose our conscious identity; and this is equivalent to no future existence at all. And the two states must be so

connected as to seem to us one continuous unbroken existence. Though death may destroy the elements of active sin, it seems impossible by an essential law of being, that it should improve or increase our moral perceptions or affections. These can be improved *only* by our own efforts. They consist in habits of mind, and of course, cannot be possessed, till they are acquired; and from the nature of the case, these efforts can only be made by ourselves. They may be induced and guided by motives and influence; but they must be our own habits of feeling and thinking. Upon this hypothesis, it is as reasonable to suppose a connexion between our actions here, and our immediate condition after death, as to suppose such connexion between our actions yesterday and our condition to-day. And upon this view of the future, we might suppose that whatever rewards and punishments were not complete before death, would be experienced afterwards, as well as for the actions of one day or year to meet their retributions the next.

2. It will be asked, in what may future rewards or punishments consist? I answer: No one knows. But being there finite beings, we must be capable of both happiness and misery. God may use our undying memory as a means of rewarding virtue and punishing vice. In the present life, when the strong propensities goad on the sinner to desperate acts, his memory is nearly paralized with other feelings, but when these active instincts shall be no more, how powerful may memory become as a means of retribution. But future punishment may be of a negative kind. It may consist in the absence of that happiness, which moral acquirements would qualify us to enjoy. But I leave this matter in the hands of God where it belongs. I only wish it to be understood, that death may not necessarily place us beyond the possibility of retribution. The great question on this subject, is, whether all sin is punished, and all virtue rewarded before death, justly, adequately, and perfectly. If

they are, there is no future retributon; if not, there is.*

*I understand that Mr. Combe, in his Moral Philosophy, argues that if God does not dispense perfect justice in this life, there is no reason to believe that he will do it in an other life. I have not read that work: but such argument, though emanating from one of the most gifted minds in the world, appears to me to be inconclusive. If man has no future existence, and God did not do him perfect justice in this life, this would prove him unjust. But if Christianity be admitted, then future existence must be admitted. And on this ground, it does not follow, that if God does not reward and punish amply and justly in this life, there can be no reason to expect he ever will. For by the same argument, we might say, if he does not do full justice to every man each moment of his life, there can be no evidence he ever will. If he does not amply punish every crime at the very moment of its commission, there can be no evidence of his justice at all. Yet we know, he often does punish crimes years *after* they are committed, and of course does not always justly punish them *when* committed, unless he sometimes punishes unjustly, which Mr. Combe would not admit. Then it follows, that his not punishing crime at the moment of its commission, is no evidence at all of his injustice. If it be consistent with divine justice to carry the effects of our actions to-day into to-morrow, or to-punish the crimes of to-day on a subsequent day, as we see it is, then by the same rule, consequences might follow beyond this life. If death be a cessation of existence, then of course no consequences could follow it; but if not, we might as well contend that sleep, or food, or any thing else, must necessarily arrest all consequences of action, as that death must do it. The amount of his argument is, that what God does not do with men in this life, we have no evidence that he ever will do. If God does not so arrange matters that all receive ample justice here—they never may. On this rule let us say, if all are not made good here, they never may be—if all are not saved here, they never may be—if all do not become immortal and incorruptible here they never may. If God *manifests* his perfections to men very imperfectly in this

3. In view of the above reasoning, I now submit the following propositions, as truths, which cannot be successfully controverted.

1. "*God will render to every man according to his deeds,*" *without exception and without partiality.*

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life, he will never manifest them more perfectly. If sin, and pain, and death, exist in this life, they must in the next life! The fact is, if this life is but a *part* of our existence, it is unnecessary and not to be expected, that the *whole* of the divine character and attributes should be transcribed upon this part. Philosophy cannot prove a future state—future consequences of our lives here, nor future progressive improvement and final immortality. Neither can it *disprove* any of them. It is the province, therefore, of Christianity to decide these questions.

Since writing the above, I have examined Combe's Moral Philosophy, and find he agrees with *me* or I with him very exactly. He says on what constitutes *happiness*: "Happiness, in truth, is nothing but the gratification of active faculties," p. 164. Again: "In Britain, that individual is fitted to be most successful in the career of wealth and its attendant advantages, who possesses vigorous health, industrious habits, great selfishness, a powerful intellect, and just so much of the moral feelings as to serve for the profitable direction of his animal powers. His combination of endowments would render self aggrandizement and worldly minded prudence the leading motives of his actions; would furnish intellect sufficient to give them effect, and morality adequate to restrain them from abuses, and from defeating their own gratifications. A person so constituted feels his faculties to be in harmony with his external condition; he has no lofty aspirations after either goodness or enjoyment which he cannot realize; he is satisfied to dedicate his undivided energies to the active business of life, and he is generally successful. He acquires wealth and distinction, stands high in the estimation of society, transmits comfort and abundance to his family, and dies in a good old age. His mind, however, obviously does not belong to the higher class; yet, being in harmony with external circumstances, and little annoyed by the im-

2. *All punishment is designed to reform the guilty or deter others.* And no punishment can be justified on any other ground.

3. *All the punishment which is necessary to effect these objects, is therefore just; and any less than that would consequently be unjust.*

4. *If all men are punished in this life, enough to reform them and deter others, then all men receive in this life, all that is necessary, and of course all that is just.*

5. *But if all men do not receive enough to reform them and for purposes of restraint, here, then the retributions of justice are not always perfected here.*

It is a truth, which none believe more unreservedly than myself, that *generally* vice is punished more or less in this life. But we all know, that all are not punished

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perfections which are every where to be seen, it is one of that class which alone in the present social condition of Britain are reasonably happy and successful. This happens, because we are in that stage of our moral and intellectual progress which corresponds with the supremacy of the above mentioned combination of faculties. In savage times, the rude, athletic warrior was the chief of his tribe: and he was also, probably, the most happy, because he possessed in the greatest degree, the qualities necessary for success in his circumstances, and was deficient in all the feelings which could not, in them, obtain gratification. If he had possessed Benevolence, Ideality, Veneration, and Conscientiousness largely developed, *he would have been unhappy.*" p. 173. That Combe thought the consequences of moral efforts might extend beyond this life, if we have a future existence, is evident from the following. "Now if human nature be capable of realizing this state on earth, it is a pity to postpone it till after death; more especially, as there is every warrant, both in reason and scripture, for believing that *every step which we make towards it in this life, will prove so much of a real advance toward it hereafter.*" p. 191. This accords exactly with my own ideas, and offers the strongest possible inducements to moral efforts and cultivation.

enough here to reform them; for they are not all reformed. Many die extremely depraved and corrupt. Neither do all see enough of the malign consequences of sin to be deterred from it. As punishment is just because it is necessary to reform the guilty and suppress vice; and as *so much is just as is necessary* to these ends; and as so much is not always inflicted in this life, the perfection of the principle and the vindication of divine justice, require that it be extended beyond, till its object be fully attained. It may be asked, if the elements of sin cease at death, how can punishment be necessary afterwards to reform? It is already made evident that if death destroys animal inclinations, it has no power to invigorate and perfect the mind. Hence retribution may be necessary for discipline. I now submit my sixth proposition.

6. *If every sin is ever punished, it must be either* BEFORE *it is committed, or* WHEN *it is committed, or* AFTER *it is committed.*

Will any contend, it is ever punished *before* it is committed? The idea is preposterous. I know it is said: "Some men's sins are open before hand, going before to judgment," &c.—1 Tim. v. 24. But I believe no reputable commentator will give any such sense to this text. Suppose one is punished beforehand for a future murder; and the punishment answers the purpose and reforms him, so that he never commits it! I conclude no candid person will contend for such a position. I now ask, is there any thing in the nature of sin, which necessarily and uniformly punishes itself fully and justly *at the very time* it is committed? I have repudiated the idea in a preceding chapter. If so, all the punishment men ever do receive after the commission of sin, would be so much more than they deserve, and would be unjust. And all of us know that men frequently are punished severely for sins in this life, long *after* they are committed. The Bible records many instances of the kind. And the language of its threatenings and denunciations implies, that retribution generally is not simultaneous

with sin; but that it follows after it. All human law is predicated upon the ground, that sin does not adequately punish itself when committed; and the common sense and feeling, experience and observation, of all communities of people, in all ages of the world, recognize the principle, that justice, necessity, and good government, and the interests of mankind, require crimes to be punished more than the inconvenience and self-abasement they occasion to criminals, *at the time* they are committed. The conclusion appears to me unavoidable and established, that sin deserves to be punished, in most cases, after its commission. Now then, if subsequent retribution be admitted to be just, as I think it must be by all candid men, we cannot avoid the conclusion, that death, sometimes at least, steps in between the sin and the retribution. I confess I have not acumen enough to avoid so obvious a conclusion. And to maintain the position that there is no moral connexion between the present and the future, and that no consequences of our actions here extend beyond this state, does seem to me to conflict with christian philosophy, and to retard its progress.

4. An individual to-day commits an attrocious murder. All appears silent and secure. He thinks his plan has been so well devised—he has thrown such a web of impenetrable circumstances around himself, that he feels sure, no suspicion can possibly attach to him. He has obtained his object. That feeling which prompted the crime is gratified. He believes in no future reckoning. His moral sense is so absorbed in evil propensities, that he feels the triumph of success. He retires to rest and to sleep. *Such* a person *can* sleep in such a situation, and many have done it. In the morning he awakes and reflects. His moral feelings, though much paralized by sinful indulgences, may now begin to be aroused. Conscience may begin to assert its outraged prerogatives upon his tortured soul. This distress would be more or less according to the amount of moral energy left. But

in a few days, the lynx-eyed vigilance of the law, begins to penetrate the mazes of his guilt, and all his dreams of security are broken up by the darkening horrors of approaching retribution. Who will say, he was punished enough in the very act of sin, and that all this is unjust? Who will say, that all this is unnecessary to protect the innocent? None. Scarcely any fanatic in misdirected benevolence could be so visionary. Then he was not justly punished *in* the act of sin. Suppose then he had an accomplice—one even worse than himself—one that goes into the crime more heartily, and with less compunction than he does. But *at the very moment* of consummating the crime, he died or was killed in the act. He deserved certainly as much punishment as the first, and of course he deserved to be punished *after* the act, and, would have received it had he lived. Now, in this case, either the first was punished a great deal more than was just, or the last a great deal less before death. Take which horn of the dilemma we please, it proves beyond all controversy, that equal retribution is not always experienced in this life. It will not do to contend that the last individual was punished by sudden death. For upon the supposition, that there is no misery beyond this life, his death was only a cessation of all misery, which the first lives to suffer. And animal death is only a debt of nature, which the good must pay as well as the bad. It is simply the end of animal life, which was a gratuitous gift at first. In executions, it is not death itself which constitutes the punishment; but the dread—the degradation—the horrid apprehensions—and all the agonizing circumstances connected with the *manner* of death, which constitutes the punishment. Suppose a good man meets upon the highway an abandoned villian, who presents a pistol, and demands his money. The good man is armed—he defends himself; and both fire at the same instant—both fall and die at the same moment. The one dies a murderer unpunished, and the other the murdered. Is there not some moral difference in their

deeds after they meet? And is there any difference in their punishment for those deeds in this life? None at all. And is there indeed no difference in the morality of the acts of committing murder, and being murdered? It is certain that the murderer here is no more punished *in this life* for that crime, than the good man. If they had lived after the murderous attempt, God's justice would have been vindicated by a different treatment of the two individuals. And if they do both live in another mode of being; and if the same God still governs them, what shall exempt them from the operation of the same unchanging principles of right and justice? "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, (*Sheol*, a state of death,) behold thou art there."—Psa. cxxxix. 7, 8. The guilty can find no escape from the requisitions of justice—impartial, and unchanging justice, unless he can go where God is not. We know, men are governed here by the same general rules, whether they live one year or a century. This life is very short for some and long for others. Is the season of discipline, of retribution, and of salvation so unequal? As retribution is one of the means of reforming and saving the world, I cannot suppose these means are to be taken from the saviour, till his work is done. I never expect men to be saved from all sin, and made alive in Christ, except through the influence of means, acting upon their reason and consciences. And as the work of purification and salvation is not perfected in this incipient state, so it appears that retribution, as a means of accomplishing this end, is also not perfected here. And if there is no discipline and judgment, and distributive justice, beyond the cloud that bounds our mortal vision, I should think there could be no truth in universal salvation, nor even in future existence.

5. Again, when we look into the world and its history, we often see the good, the innocent, and the virtuous, suffering the most intense and unmitigated afflictions. And this not on account of their misdeeds, but

often on account of their good lives. How many amiable and good wives are tormented with intemperate husbands. How many poor and virtuous children of misfortune, are oppressed and trampled in the dust by the haughty and pampered sons of affluence. How many philanthropists have sacrificed ease, wealth, and life itself, in the cause of suffering humanity. How many pure patriots have toiled and struggled against accumulated hardships and cruelties for the public good; and been rewarded with the traitor's doom. How many glorious reformers have subjected themselves to fines, dungeons, tortures, burnings, and all the appalling horrors of persecution, for the sake of principle and right. The amiable Servetus died in the excruciating agonies of a slow fire. While the dark hearted instigator of the murder, John Calvin, was solaced and admired as an honored champion of the Church. And Constantine the *great!* who murdered his wife, and son, and most of his relatives, was caressed and lauded as a great and glorious patron of the *Prince of Peace!* Wherever war has raged, innocent multitudes in all ages, have been rendered miserable. I know that these things are the incidental evils which result from the abuse of things necessary in themselves. Still they show that equal and perfect retribution cannot take place in this state, from the nature of things. The innocent Jesus was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, and was crucified for being good. Are rewards and punishments then distributed to all in the *present life*, with such unerring certainty and exactness, that they are sufficient to encourage the good, and restrain the passions and propensities of the wicked? I think stubborn facts—facts that are seen and felt—facts that cannot lie—speak out in the negative, and in a strong natural voice, like nature's eternal thunder, rolling through every age and nation, proclaim, that there must be a *future* where the inequalities and wrongs of this life shall be righted, and the justice of heaven perfected.)

III. I propose now to notice briefly the most prominent passages of scripture, which are thought to relate to this question.

And first, we will attend to such as are relied on as proof in opposition to the above reasoning, that there is a full and perfect retribution in this life. "The way of the transgressor is hard," very true; but does that prove all men to receive *all* the punishment necessary to reform them in this life, and of course *all* that is just? Far from it. "There is no peace saith my God to the wicked." But are they always so unhappy in sin as to make them sick of it, and flee from it? No. Then their want of peace is not a perfect retribution. "Great peace have they which love thy law and nothing shall offend them." Also, "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Upon all these and similar passages, I remark, they are all *proverbs* or maxims of general truth. They do not affirm that all experience a perfect retribution in this life; but only declare the general effects of human conduct. Another Proverb says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." This is a general truth; but who would undertake to prove from this general maxim, that no child who was well trained would ever go astray? Another Proverb says, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are as bold as a lion." It is a general truth that the wicked are timid; and that the good are bold; but it is by no means a universal truth. Was Fernando Cortez a good man? he certainly was bold as a lion. What shall we say of Pizarro, and multitudes of cruel men? shall we call them good because they were bold, and the wicked cowardly? But there is another Proverb which some think conclusive evidence of perfect retribution here. "Behold the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; much more the wicked and the sinner." Now, if the righteous are fully and perfectly and universally *recompensed in* the earth, how could the wicked and the

sinner be recompensed in the earth *much more* than they are? It would be impossible. The very language of this Proverb shows it to refer to nothing more than the general effects of our actions here. I know of no other passages in the Bible as strong or as frequently quoted to sustain the doctrine that retribution is full, perfect, and universal, in this state, as the above. And I have no suspicion that they either do, or were ever designed to teach such a sentiment. It is true that the ancient Hebrews were much in the dark in relation to the future. Of course, they could know very little about continued being, future discipline, perfect retribution, or immortal salvation. For this reason, probably divine justice was often more distinctly manifested to them in this life. At any rate, no such Proverbs can establish any thing more than general facts, and never universal and unexceptionable truths. (See Prov. xiii. 15.; Isa. lvii. 21; Psa. cxix. 165; Prov. iii. 75; also xi. 31.

2. We will now see if some passages do not teach with irresistible force, that retributions are not always perfect in this state. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." Now if it be true, that sometimes in this life, God does not deal with men after their sins, and does not reward them according to their iniquities, then all is true for which we contend. Again: "There be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked. Again, there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous." Now if it be true, that in this life, sometimes the good get the rewards of iniquity, and the wicked sometimes get the rewards of righteousness, as this text declares, and as observation teaches, then retributions here are not perfect; and I do not see how any ingenuity can make these texts teach any thing else. Psa. ciii. 10; Eccl. viii. 14.

3. I believe it to be universally admitted, that all the prevailing religions of our Saviour's day, comprised the doctrine of future retribution in some form or other.

Of course, Christ and the Apostles never teach it as a new or disputed point. But their language is such as would naturally confirm the people in that impression, which could not have been expected, had they considered the doctrine erroneous. The people did so understand them; and the doctrine of disciplinary retribution was the prevailing doctrine of the primitive Church for several centuries. It may be alleged, that the people addressed by Christ and the Apostles, also believed in *endless* punishment; and that the argument applies as much in favor of that doctrine. Whether they did or not, the sacred teachers were not understood at the time, to confirm and countenance that horrible doctrine; for the primitive church generally believed in final universal salvation. Besides the Bible doctrine of the Divine attributes conflicts with that notion. The Bible doctrine of retribution is, when stripped of its imagery, that "God will render to every man, according to his deeds." Of course it teaches not endless punishment. The Bible doctrine of the Saviour's mission—his object and purposes, militates against that doctrine. Many unequivocal declarations of the Bible militate against it. The attributes of eternal justice, and all that is good in heaven and earth are opposed to that doctrine. Of course it cannot be true. But not one of these considerations will militate against the idea of a more full and perfect retribution resulting from the divine government, than what is manifest in this first moment of our being. Indeed, if all we see in this world of the divine justice, is all there is to be ever seen, I should think God, after all, may be unjust, and endless punishment may be true. Neither no future retribution nor endless punishment, can be reconciled with the existence of a perfect God; and hence my two edged sword is forced in between these errors; and I wish it were sharp enough to cut them both down without loss to their friends.

4. I will give now a few examples of a class of passages, which refer to the sufferings of the primitive chris-

tians, not as deserved punishments, but as sacrifices to christian reform; for which they were to be rewarded after this life; for they did suffer every form of wo; and they enjoyed to be sure the approbation of conscience. This happiness the world could not destroy; but many real and undeserved agonies they suffered; and I do not believe the gratification of conscience a sufficient reward for such sacrifices. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." The term *heaven* to be sure, is a word of different meanings; but here it was manifestly used to denote a state subsequent to the state of persecution and suffering, for which these disciples were to be rewarded. It appears to me evident that the Saviour intended to encourage his disciples to perseverance and resignation in view of a reward that was to succeed their trials. "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is *laid up* for me a crown of righteousness; which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Paul was about to depart—his earthly career was winding up; he reviewed his past life, and rejoiced in view of the reward of his labors; and the last clause clearly indicates, that the obedient and faithful were to be more abundantly blessed at the termination of their earthly toils, than the perverse and disobedient. Will the reader examine Mat. v. 11, 12; 2d Tim. iv. 6, 8; 2d Cor. iv. 17, 18; Mat. xix. 27, 30; Mark x. 28, 30; Luke xviii. 29, 30; Rev. xiv. 13; 1st Tim. iv. 8; 1st Cor. ix. 24, 27.

5. After all, I hope not to be understood, that there are no rewards and punishments here, but only that they are imperfect. Virtue generally brings along with it much reward; but from the necessary imperfection of

all things here, it often involves its votaries in great afflictions. So sin, by the admirable arrangements of Divine Providence, often and generally drags after it many miseries. My general principles of retribution agree with those who deny its future existence; only I extend them into the future, on the ground, that they are not fully carried out here. There is so much of the manifestations of divine justice in this world, that we may find in them assurances of an over ruling hand. But the passions of men are often so strong, and temptations so great, that great and weighty considerations, drawn from divine retributions, seem requisite to counteract them, and guard the citadel of human volition; especially among the depraved. It has been shown before, that the doctrine of endless punishment, nullifies substantially all retribution, and is therefore, the worst view of the subject ever taught.

6. To conclude, let me say, I advocate no world of perfect wo; no local hell of material fire, to torture spiritual beings; nor indeed any purgatorial flames. But the prolongation of our present conscious existence, and its progressive exaltation to the fullness of Christ. That during his reign, all the inequalities and wrongs of this incipient state of our being, will be rectified; and the perfect justice and goodness of Jehovah will be manifest. That our present state is the embryo or childhood of our existence; and when this mortal coil decays, our youthful being will come into circumstances far more favorable to its developement and progress. Jesus is the great Master; his moral kingdom is his school. All mankind are to become his pupils, and to graduate in the science of morals and of heaven. There is a moral power in this system of most efficient and mighty energy. It is destined to conquer error, and elevate the intelligent creation to the boundless sunshine of truth, and pour the broad glories of moral day, over the retiring waves of the darkness and tears of ages past.

CHAPTER XII.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF ENDLESS PUNISHMENT; AND THE PRACTICAL, MORAL, AND POLITICAL TENDENCY AND BEARING OF UNIVERSALISM AND PARTIALISM CONSIDERED.

CAN the dogma of endless punishment for the sins of this life, be just? If so, the sins of this life must be infinite. Well, if each and every sin a person commits be infinite, then he must deserve as many endless punishments as the number of his sins; and then a whole eternity of pain would only punish him for *one* sin, and all the rest must go unpunished. And according to this, when we have committed one sin, we have deserved as much as we can ever get, and therefore, we might then sin on with impunity. But if no *one* sin alone is infinite, then all sins together could not be so. Because no possible number of finite things added together, would make one infinite thing. But man has no infinite faculty—no infinite power. How then can he commit an infinite act? Even man's intentions in sin are not infinitely evil—there is nothing infinite about him. But some say, he has power to sin equal to his power to suffer. Very well; but he has in his constitution no power to live endlessly; nor a moment longer than sustained by the Divine hand; much less has he in himself power to suffer endlessly. All that belongs to man's nature, is limited, finite, and so must be his acts, and their retributions.

2. None will deny, that the Bible doctrine of punishment, is, that it will be inflicted on the sinner, and re-

ceived by him. Now an endless punishment never could be inflicted on the sinner nor received by him; for though he might be burned in literal fire, millions of times hotter than any volcano, a greater number of millions of years than the number of sands in the globe, for every minute he lives here in sin, that would not be either an infinite or an endless punishment. Neither would this, awful and horrible as it would be, be *any part* of endless punishment; because even after all that, and millions of times as much more, the whole of endless punishment would still be before him! still untasted, unsuffered, and unexplored! Still a boundless future would rise beyond, and unroll its dark ages of pain; and the time could never, never come, when he would have received *any part* of his due. Justice forever surging up its immortal flames, and never beginning to be satisfied! Good heavens—what a thing this kind of justice must be!

3. An endless punishment cannot be *according* to, or *proportioned* to any thing which is not endless. But all the sins of this life have an end; therefore, they cannot deserve a punishment which has none. Eternity, Immensity, and God's Existence, have all one incomprehensible attribute, that can be proportioned to nothing else. Their essential and necessary *infinity* stands alone, uncounted, unmeasured, uncomprehended, and uncompared, and cannot possibly have any ratio of proportion with any thing that ends. Hence no sin committed in this life can bear any proportion at all to endless pain. One essential attribute of all punishment, when completed, is, that it is *proportioned* to the sin punished. A punishment *less* than is deserved, is an exemption from punishment, to the extent of such deficiency; and all greater than that is arbitrary and wanton cruelty, as much as the punishment of an innocent being would be. Man cannot be punished *more* than he deserves, with any more justice than God himself could be punished. And none can be punished *less* than they deserve, with any more justice, than all guilt may be exempt. Will

nothing short of *endless* punishment satisfy the desires of the good? Let us reason and calculate. What punishment would seem enough for the sin of a single minute? Suppose a christian stands by and sees a fellow being writhing in a furnace of fire—see his agony—see the crisping of his flesh—the boiling of his blood and marrow; and hear his shrieks and screams for a whole day; would he not think the poor creature sufficiently punished for the sin of one minute? If not, suppose the same punishment prolonged a thousand years—oh, how long for such suffering! Would that satisfy the justice of a God of infinite mercy, benevolence, and goodness? Would it satisfy the good and just feelings of christians to see all this inflicted for one minute's sin? If not, let it be still extended. We wish to see how long merciful christians and a merciful God would wish to punish the sin of a single minute. The nearest fixed star is estimated at 5,000,000,000,000 miles from us—a distance which a cannon ball would not pass over, in less than eleven hundred and eighty thousand years. Suppose this earth to be the centre of a globe of fine sand, whose circumference should embrace the fixed stars; and suppose one poor sinner should be living and agonizing in the hottest flames, as many millions of centuries as the sands in this supposed globe—suppose this sum to be multiplied by as many figures placed in a row as would reach round the earth—and again this product into itself a hundred thousand million times—and all this punishment for the sin of *one minute!* Would *that* be enough? I ask not a Devil whether *that* would satisfy him; for I am told that *he* is so cruel as never to be satisfied; but I do ask all *christians,* if they would not suppose that enough? I ask too if a God, who is worthy of our homage—whose "*tender mercies are over all his works*"—would not be satisfied that such a punishment was enough for the sin of one minute? Well, if this is enough for one minute's sin, when a person had suffered all this as many times over as he had lived minutes in

sin, his punishment would end. And all this is not endless misery. Nay, it is not so much as a drop to the ocean. The whole ocean is made up of some given number of drops; but no possible number of periods above described, could amount to endless duration.

4. Now suppose one has suffered a day—a year—or millions of years—or during a period like that described above. Must this be considered *punishment* for his sins —*some* punishment—at least *some* part or portion of the punishment due to him; or no portion of it at all. If it be no part or portion of his punishment, then he might be always suffering, and still never receive any of his punishment. And if he is doomed forever to suffer without ever receiving *any* of his punishment, then he never suffers endless punishment at all; but he is made the victim of arbitrary and wanton cruelty. Eternal misery—and no part of it *any* of the punishment which he deserved. And who will accuse God of inflicting ages of agony upon any person, without intending thereby to punish him at all for sin? But if the other horn of the dilemma be taken, and it is conceded that these years or ages of pain are punishment—that they are *some* portion of what justice required, then when an individual has received this part or portion of his due, there cannot remain as much due him as at first. There must have been some certain amount of punishment his due at first, else there could have been none his due. And the amount due him at first, must have been *according* to the amount of his sins. Well, when he has received a part of this amount, the remainder must be *less* than the whole. Take any portion of a thing from the whole, and the remainder must necessarily be diminished in the same proportion. Hence, the moment a person has received *some* of his just punishment, the amount still due, is so much diminished. Therefore, if all this period of suffering above described should ever be experienced by any person, it must be experienced either as no punishment at all, or as some portion of just retribution, which

must diminish the amount due. And every moment or age the punishment should be inflicted, there must remain so much less in the claims of justice. And consequently the whole amount of just punishment must either be not suffered at all, or come finally to an end, by the necessary laws of proportion. The endless existence of God cannot be measured or compared, or proportioned to any thing. The attribute of infinity admits of no measurements or proportions. But sin is earth born, and grew out of created things; and the Bible, as well as common sense, and justice, compares punishment with sin—measures and proportions the one to the other. Therefore, punishment *for* sin, *just* punishment, *cannot* be endless. I challenge the universe to overturn this argument. Not on account of any thing in the writer, but because the argument is an incontrovertible demonstration, that endless punishment is false because it is unjust. A cloud of sophistry may be thrown around it, but it *never can be refuted.*

II. We will now inquire into the moral effects of the doctrine opposed, compared with those of the doctrine advocated. Rewards and punishments doubtless influence outward actions very much. Yet the conduct of men depends much more upon their dispositions. That doctrine is therefore best, which calls out and increases the moral feelings the most. All our feelings are excited into action, and increased and strengthened by the presence of their appropriate objects. The sight of proffered gold, and the facility of obtaining it, will increase avarice. The presence of opposition and insult will awaken and increase angry and vindictive feelings. The presence of licentious objects will awaken and increase such propensities. The presence of objects of dread will excite alarm. The presence of misfortune will excite sympathy and benevolence. The exhibition of love and kindness will excite such amiable feelings. And all the dispositions of man, thus excited by their appropriate objects, are increased and strengthened only by their in-

fluence. We all know, that children trained up in the midst of corruption, are apt to be corrupt. If trained under harsh and cruel treatment, they are apt to be cruel and vindictive in disposition. If trained under the gentle and affectionate exhibitions of love and virtue, they are apt to be kind and gentle in their own tempers. This is nature's law, which must be regarded, in the government and improvement of men. All crimes are the fruit of a depraved and corrupted disposition of mind. Therefore, a system which predisposes the mind to virtue, by softening the heart, and rendering the disposition tender and compassionate, is much better than a system, which tends to harden the heart, and render it callous to the feelings of humanity.

2. See in yonder Court—a fellow being is doomed to die for crime. Every heart is moved—every eye weeps—and every soul is thrilled with deep sympathizing anguish. But look now into yonder church, where the doctrine is taught and believed, that would consign a large portion of the audience, parents, children, brothers, sisters, and friends, to the unutterable and endless agonies of hell. You see here but little emotion. Some admiring the fashions, some absorbed in pecuniary speculations—some dreaming the visions of love—some admiring the art of a favorite preacher—some elongating the face into sanctimonious dimensions—and some nodding into oblivious sleep. They generally believe; and this belief has become an opiate to their sensibilities. The horrid din of immortal cruelty has so chilled their souls, that they can contemplate the endless burning of their dearest friends without horror. Does not that same hardened apathy—that same cold, unrelenting insensibility, predispose them to crime, to cruelty, and bloody deeds? What else, in the name of mercy, could have led to the *Auto da fe*—the Inquisition—the burning fagots—and the ten thousand varied cruelties, which have been perpetrated around the firey altar of this dark and ferocious sentiment?

3. Go to some far and lonely isle—some blissful sequestered shade, where the harsh roar of damnation never sounded—where the thunders of wrath, and the storms of hell never thrilled the tender soul, nor blighted the soft and gentle germs of humanity. Where God was never dressed in a tyrant's awful frowns; but exhibited in the kind tokens of a father's love—tender, beneficent, and good. Where young hearts were early warmed with mercy's inspiring breath; and all were led by her voice to acts of charity, philanthropy, and justice—where religion's songs were only sweet with the honeyed strains of heaven, and warm with the breathing melodies of mercy and kindness—where heart meets heart, and mind flows to mind, in overflowing tenderness and fraternal endearment. Now let a minister of interminable wrath break into this sweet and holy Eden, as satan is said to have broken into Paradise. Let him teach there for the first time, the doctrine of an endless hell —the implacaple wrath of heaven, and the endless burning agonies of their kindred friends. They would start back aghast with horror. They would look upon him as a fiend of unfeeling cruelty, begrimed with the horrors of a merciless demon. If they believed his message true, their hair would stand on end—their hearts would break with unearthly terror—groans and shrieks would rend the sky. "Oh my child! my companion! my parent! my friend! to hell—endless pain! And what is heaven? All marble, wintry-cold, unsympathizing apathy! Why, oh why were we made? when storms of fire flame around eternity, and heave their vengeance over the future destiny of mankind!"

4. These are the feelings which the first annunciation of this doctrine would produce. After a while the most hard and selfish would begin to fancy themselves the subjects of hope; and feel willing that others should be burned, who would not assent to their views and measures. They would then begin to treat them as the subjects of wrath. Others would intend to avail them-

selves of this religion before death; and mean while, borrowing its awful language, they would learn to blaspheme God and curse their fellow men. The doctrine, therefore, operates doubly pernicious—it hardens the hearts of all; making some bigoted and cruel—and others profane and licentious. It produces the evil, it is designed to obviate. As constant doctoring generally makes constant doctoring necessary, so an endless hell often makes its votaries so corrupt, that nothing else will restrain them; and even that they all mean to escape by repentance. The reason we have some bad professors of our doctrine, is, to a great extent, because they have been educated in the principles of an endless hell; and are often so vitiated with them, that all the love of heaven, and all the beauty and glory of Christ, cannot charm them to the love and practice of virtue. To test our doctrine, it is necessary to take a community of little children, and let them learn nothing of endless wo. Let them be taught that an Almighty and all perfect being governs the world. That we are all his children—that he will ever reward virtue and punish vice; and will improve and bring us all up finally to a high and blissful state. That he loves us all as a great, and good, and kind father; and gives us laws and executes them for our good. And as we are all brethren we should love one another—be honest—and live and enjoy the sweets of social affection. Let them be thus reared, and attached to all that is good—let all the vindictive and cruel passions be eradicated from their tender minds, by the gentle admonitions of kind affection, and the happy influence of mild and endearing example and discipline. Then, if in riper years, they are more corrupt than the people where the opposite doctrines prevail, it is because our doctrine has a worse tendency.

5. But we must have a fair trial—dispositions often descend from parent to child for several generations. And no doubt, the mind of a mother contemplating eternal hell horrors, not only drinks in much of the dark

spirit, but often imparts it to her offspring. So we must have our views prevail throughout all christendom, as long as others have. And if in that time, fifty millions of persons are put to death for their opinions by Universalists, then we shall have reason to think the doctrine no better than Partialism. It will be said, Partialists do not do such things now. True, but the reason is, they are all half reformed—few of them are sound in the horrible faith. Very few of them are without doubts of its truth. Many disavow it entirely; and there is so much doubt generally among its professors, that not one probably among them except children and dolts, that believes enough in it to be fully under its dreadful influence. Science has made important inroads upon the doctrine, and shaken its terrible sceptre from the minds of many. And even those, who do firmly believe in it, have their feelings vastly influenced by their intercourse with liberal men, and the tolerant views which have grown into respect, in spite of prejudice and bigotry.

6. Why such a want of social love in the world? Why does selfishness engross most every wish, thought, act and feeling? Self-love is natural and right, when sufficiently modified by humanity. But it is often allowed to swell beyond the boundaries of justice and the philanthropic rules of our Saviour. How much cold misanthropic calculation—what dark and cruel censures—what duplicity and fraud every where prevail! How much hypocrisy and knavery move in the disguise of virtue! How often the friendly smile but conceals the hostile and treacherous heart! All this accords with the vindictive elements of that earth-begotten system, which sanctifies and nourishes the darkest passions of man. God has revealed himself in the face of Jesus, as the Father of mankind, infinite, and eternal in his love. He spreads around us the bounties of a kind providence and the tokens of his grace. But many will not adore such a God—they must have one passionate and revengeful,

shall I say like themselves? He has made them brethren—and made the good of each consist in the good of all. But they repudiate the sacred tie—they reject his laws, and turn recreant to nature. He has poured upon their hearts, strong, pure, and holy sympathies; but many study each other's ruin, and have often reveled in red handed persecution. Yes, men have often been so hardened by a false and cruel religion, that the shrieks and groans of fancied heritics, were softest music in their ears. They have assembled in thousands rejoicing to see a fellow being *burn!* Tender youths have learned to feast their eyes with the burning flesh and streaming blood of their fellow beings, and to glow with religious delight as they gazed! Aged mothers have mingled in the joyous group to laugh at pain, and imitate their God in cruel exultation! And little children, with their tender sympathies already withered, have crowded to the scenes, to be amused with sights of horror! It was not that religion, which concentrates in its bright spirit, all that is good, and all that is kind, that thus froze up all the gentle streams of humanity—that bound every tender feeling, and every kindly fibre of their hearts, in chains of adamant; and poured the palsying spell over all the blighted sensibilities of nature. Oh, no. It was not the religion of justice, of love, and of God. But it was the cold, cheerless, cruel doctrines of a vindictive and blind superstition. It was SUPERSTITION, enthroned upon the dark mountain of ignorance, supported by fraud and murder; and clothed in all the frightful phantoms of frenzied imagination, bearing down like dark and wintery clouds, upon the moral sensibilities of mankind. This, in every age. has struck its poisoned fangs into the very springs and fountains of human virtue, and crushed them into melancholy ruins. But a brighter day is dawning on the world. Hoary systems of error, venerated by past generations, are crumbling into dust, and receding before the reforming spirit of a happier age. May the light of heaven shine on, in the mild beams of

irradiating mercy, that the sweet and gentle doctrines of the kingdom may come as an increasing river of peace, to warm mankind into humanity and love.

II. Let us now look at the political bearing of these two systems. The political and religious views of any people must gradually approximate and assimilate to each other. This being a fact, the prevalence of republican principles will naturally lead to liberal and tolerant views of religion; and the prevalence of an intolerant religion will naturally lead to intolerant and despotic principles of government. Whence originated Partialism? In the dark ages of the world, when kings reigned and despots swayed the destinies of men—when tyrants waded in blood to empire; and reared their thrones in terror over the awe stricken and degraded world; when the multitudes cowered and trembled in their chains, writhed in slavery, and crouched in servile despair around the crimsoned thrones of majesty. Such was the birth place of Partialism. The religion of Jesus was that of reciprocity and good will. It breathed its philanthropic feelings equally to all. But its precepts and principles were too pure for the avarice, ambition, and intolerance of the times. The universal despotism that prevailed, and the habits and feelings of cruelty among all classes, enabled the proud oppressors of the earth soon to engraft all the features of tyrany into the religion of Jesus. They soon effaced the endearing memory of the *paternal* character of God from the minds of christians. They seated a Deity upon a pompous and dazzling throne, surrounded with obsequious angelic votaries, and millions of celestials, who cringed and bowed to the displays of *power*. They covered this august monarchy with darkness and clouds, storms and tempests, tremendous power and vindictive wrath, capricious passions and celestial fire. They borrowed all the terrific images of earth and sky; tornadoes, earthquakes, volcanoes, floods, thunders, and electric fires, to enrobe their Divinity in all the overwhelming terrors of nature. They paused not here,

but imagination inflamed with the darkest passions, guided by the spirit of tyranny, and plunging down to deeps unknown, poured out the everlasting vengeance of an almighty tyrant in an ocean of flame. Having thus laid a strong foundation of despotism in the religious impressions of men; having availed themselves of religion to bring the people to bow with implicit servility to one great tyrant of all tyrants, they might have given the good to his favor, and the bad to his implacable wrath. But to protect virtue and suppress vice seems not to have been the grand object of this divine establishment; besides, it was always seen that the most servile, cringing slaves to this religious despotism, were generally the most corrupt, cruel, and ferocious. The grand object with the master spirits who swayed public opinion, was to establish themselves in power; to secure their cruelties and oppressions from public scrutiny and reprobation; and accustom the public mind to unconditional and absolute submission. To this end, all equity and impartiality were banished from religion; and practical goodness was held to be no security from the future vengeance of the divine despot. But some were decreed to hell, and others to heaven, as the *Sovereign* pleased! Then came the *divine* right of kings, and the intercession of priests. If the great *king of kings* sits on a dazzling throne, surrounded with servile millions, compelled to uncomplaining acquiescence, why might not a *king of men* sit on a golden throne, surrounded with brilliant pomp and trembling slaves? If the great *king of kings* looks down with the scorn of majesty upon all men as unworthy his notice, totally depraved, and only fit for everlasting tortures, why might not a *king of men* despise their wants, laugh at their miseries, and torture such as suits his caprice? Why might he not elect his favorites, regardless of merit, and reprobate whom he would, because he willed it, to feel the fierceness of his ire? And could the poor *people* complain of this, since it should come from a king, who patterned after *the high precedents* of the king of all?

2. What is Despotism? It is a government which has for its object the wealth, aggrandizement, and power of rulers and their satellites, and not the good of the governed. Where all laws are for the sole benefit of rulers; and the governed are regarded as having no rights, but subjected in all respects to the pleasure, caprice or whims of those that govern. What is Partialism then? It is a system of religious despotism, on which is reared, secured, and chained the political despotism of tyrants. No cruel marble hearted wretch in power was ever guilty of an act of injustice and tyranny, that had not more than a parallel in the religious creeds of men. They have taught us to receive principles as truth in religion without examination. So in despotism. They have taught us passive and servile submission to supposed creeds of heaven, without inquiring into their rectitude. So despotism demands an implicit submission to its decrees, whether right or wrong. Despotism has never made the real merit and moral worth of men the ground of its favors; neither has Partialism. Despotism has had its dismal dungeons, its galling chains, its torturing wheels, and its slow fires to aggravate and prolong human agony. But what are these to the more lingering and more excruciating tortures of the Inquisition of Partialism? Or the still deeper, keener, more prolonged, unutterable agonies of her endless hell? Indeed, Partialism is a system of omnipotent, boundless despotism, of which all political despotisms, with all their blood and tears, are only miniature imitations.

3. Well, what is Republicanism? It is equality, liberty and justice. Its laws are all designed for the good of the governed. It rewards virtue for its support, and punishes vice for its suppression; because virtue is essential to happiness and general good, and vice leads to misery. Its requirements, rewards and penalties, have all the same object, *the greatest good of all the governed.* These principles are so well understood in our country, that they have made important inroads upon

the despotic religion of our fathers. Men, accustomed to correct views of government, begin to learn that the attributes of divine government must be predicated in immutable and perfect goodness. Many no longer approach the throne of Omnipotence as cringing slaves to an inexorable tyrant, but as children to a father. They view the divine government as a union of justice, mercy, and love, in the perfection of a most sublime and glorious paternal character. Hence, every Universalist is a republican—and every republican should be a Universalist; and would be were he properly enlightened. And hence, too, we have often had convincing evidence, that most of the great doctors of Partialism, have been more or less openly in favor of despotism, and hostile to free institutions.

4. Who that believes the common people are totally depraved, and of course as bad as their devil can be, would be willing to give them any hand in legislation? Who that believes these people are to be burned forever for the glory of God, would not naturally wish for men and measures that would promote his glory in the same way on earth? When men govern as Republicans, under a wise, just, and kind Providence, they will feel bound to imitate that Providence, in wise and just laws designed for general good. But when they govern as despots, by right divine, they are apt to forget the public good in devotion to their own interests. And when they attempt to imitate their passionate, vengeful, and partial Deity, their usurpations will be bounded only by their power.

5. Partialism teaches that the crimes of the saints are no sin in them, and that they ought not to be punished, and that they will not be; so despotism has its favorites not subjected to the impartial retributions of justice. But Republicanism never inquires whether a person has been born again, but awards to him the fruit of his *doing*, whether in a natural or spiritual state. So Universalism and the Bible teach, that "he that doeth wrong

shall receive for the wrong that he hath done, and there is no respect of persons with God." Despotism is capricious, revengeful, and cruel, involving children in the fault of their parents, and punishing the victims of its hate, without regard to the number and extent of their crimes, with the most unrelenting and barbarous severity. So Partialism pours out its unmeasured wrath upon mankind, and even the whole brute creation for the sin of Adam! And in its false pretensions of mercy, it punishes even the innocent instead of the guilty, and then claims the right to punish the guilty, notwithstanding! It either exempts offenders from all punishment, by sovereign partiality, or punishes them alike, without distinction, without mercy, without end, and without any good object.

6. Despotism has no other object in punishment but the indulgence of revenge. So Partialism pursues its hapless victims beyond the grave—like an insatiable fiend, it tears the body from its dreamless sleep only to suffer; and it follows the poor subject of its fury through eternal ages, with implacable and unappeasable ferocity, with no other object but to gratify its love of misery. Despotism exults in the extent of its cruelties—so Partialism boasts its greatest glory in unending and infinite pain! Surely, it feasts on groans and tears; and snuffs with rapture the incense of boundless desolation, and a suffering, weeping, ruined universe. Despotism imposes passive submission to its mandates, and inhibits free inquiry, and the open investigation of its claims and principles. So Partialism forbids investigation, disclaims reason, and shrouds its cruel pretentions in the awful terrors of power exerted only to destroy.

7. But Republicanism chastises only for prevention or reformation; cherishes free inquiry; encourages intellectual enterprize; extends its fostering and protecting care impartially to all the good; makes justice but the minister of public philanthropy; submits its acts to public scrutiny; and exerts all its energies for the best in-

terests and greatest good of all. So it is with our religion. This is the consistent religion of Republicans. Both are based upon the immutable principles of eternal rectitude; and both lead to liberty, equality, and universal peace, public prosperity, and the true glory of man. Despotism and Partialism! How much alike! They are near relatives—twin sisters—born in darkness, and nursed on human gore; reared by the care of tyrants and oppressors; educated in fields of blood and fire; and clothed in wrath darker than the portending storm. They have lived in truly fraternal alliance; polluted earth with their kindred breath, and poured the smoke of their sacrifices, with the sighs of suffering generations upon the skies. They must be twins in death. Light is bursting forth upon benighted man. He rises from the slumber of ages, and his shackles fall! The *fiat* of omnipotent truth has decreed their doom. Good men and angels will rejoice. The patriot heroes of liberty, and the martyred heralds of christian philanthropy will triumph —and the beatified millions of all the good, will chant a joyous requiem over their grave. *So mote it be.*

Ages of darkness, and deep dungeons drear,
Oppressions vile; and slavery's pensive tear;
Dark Inquisitions; fagots, fire, and chains;
The product foul, of superstition's plains: [sighs;
Wrongs, wars, and griefs; and groans, and heaving
Frauds, crimes, and woes; and Nature's sunder'd ties;
These all must cease; too long has been the night,
Of Man progressive; struggling up to light.
These all must end; and o'er the world must rise,
A brighter sun, to dissipate the lies,
To disenthral the glad, immortal mind,
And teach humanity, to human kind.
Bright o'er the world, may truth eternal reign,
Exalt our race, and close the scenes of pain.

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ERRATA.—On page 42, for Chapter II., read Chapter III.

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